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# ST. THOMAS' SEMINARY

Wm. J. HOWLETT.

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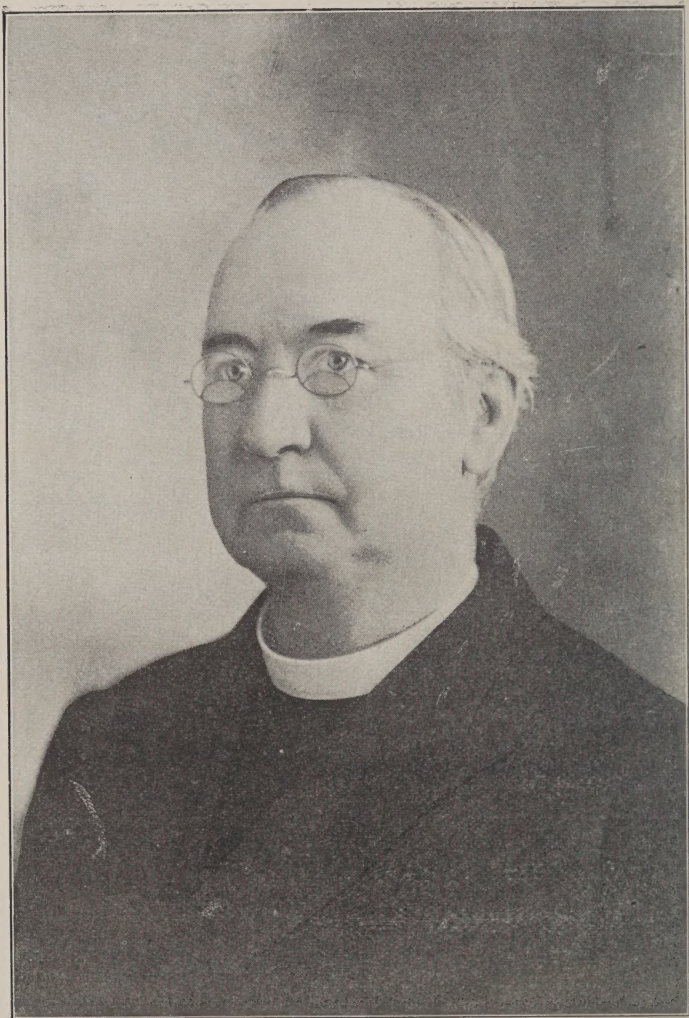
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REV. W. J. HOWLETT.

Historical Tribute  
TO  
ST. THOMAS' SEMINARY  
AT  
POPLAR NECK  
NEAR  
BARDSTOWN, KENTUCKY.

---

BY  
REV. WM. J. HOWLETT.

"Fas est et decet meminisse fratrum."

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B. HERDER, ST. LOUIS, MO.  
17 South Broadway,  
1906.

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Denver, Colo., June 4, \_\_\_\_\_ 1906.

MY DEAR FATHER HOWLETT:-

I have read every word of your book, from Preface to Finis, and let me assure you in all sincerity that it has been many a day since I read a book with such genuine pleasure. I congratulate you most cordially on the completion of this delightful tribute to the Mother Seminary of the West, the cradle of the Church in Kentucky. Those of the alumni who still live should be grateful for the work you have done to preserve in such excellent form the story of an institution which has given many self-sacrificing, heroic, saintly missionaries to the Church. Old St. Thomas' has a remarkable story, a unique history.

I realize the amount of work and patience required in collecting, selecting and arranging the material. This was not an easy task, but you have done the work remarkably well. It can easily be seen that you did not consider it an irksome task, but a labor of love.

I cannot write a fraction of what I desire to say in praise of this "Historical Tribute", but I will say that I consider your descriptions most vivid. The second Chapter is good and spicy; the last two Chapters are masterpieces. I am particularly pleased with certain paragraphs wherein you strike the right key, but I have not found an uninteresting paragraph or one dull line in the entire work.

Wishing your book a wide circulation, and hoping it may prove beneficial to many readers who never before heard of St. Thomas' Seminary, I remain

Yours faithfully,

+ R. C. Matz  
Bishop of Denver

## DEDICATION.

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To the Memory of the Dear, Homely, Old Institution—Kentucky's First Well-Spring of Piety and Learning; To the Students, Who, Within Its Walls, Learned to Love God and to Love One Another, And To the Teachers Who Taught Them These Lessons, These Pages Are Lovingly Inscribed By

THE AUTHOR.



## PREFACE.

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Viewed in certain lights, time and space are small matters. Nearly forty years have gone by since the last student passed out from Old St. 'Thomas' Seminary, and yet its form, shape, spirit and life have not dimmed perceptibly in the recollection of those who were its inmates, and the home-like grasp that it took upon their nature has not loosened in the jar of the rolling wheels of time. Far and near, the old students share the same more than kindly feelings for the old place, and each one of them could voice his tribute from his distance with the same force as if he were present at the gates. So, at this distant day and place, it is mine to say what all have felt at every moment since Old St. 'Thomas' bade them adieu and blessed them for higher labors.

I first saw St. 'Thomas' Seminary in its active, busy days, while its glory was still around it like a halo, and its hope for a long and vigorous life was strong and bright. I last saw it less than a ruin, but its honor was unstained, and its memory was held in benediction. Desolation reigned around it, and silence and sadness brooded over it, yet the echo of the old-time free and happy life came from it, and the perfume of a thousand loves was wafted back to it from as many hearts that beat with pleasant and grateful remembrance. In that moment came the thought and inspiration to write something, and this tribute is the fruit of that visit.

## PREFACE.

While securing historical permanency to the course of the oldest Seminary in the West, my intention has been rather to give definite form to the many expressions of affection and reverence for the old *Alma Mater* and those connected with it, to embody the general feelings of all old St. Thomas' students and to indicate the reasons for the universal good will.

To do this, I have taken the more important incidents connected with the establishment of the Seminary, its internal working, and the special and lasting results that trace their causes to it. Minor matters of detail I have used to show the connection between the greater events and the unity of spirit and action that ran through the whole course of its existence.

He who stands upon the top of the highest peak in the early morning and sees beneath him a sea of white mist, through which only the summits of the surrounding mountains penetrate, gets no real or adequate idea of actual mountain scenery unless he waits until the sun has dispersed the cloud that fills every valley and hides it from his view. Then he will see the abutting bases of the mountains, the ridges that connect them, the valleys that give them greater prominence and the gorges that are avenues of escape for what, if pent up, might become destroying floods. The beauty, the perfection and the unity of the rugged scene is then recognized, and even the distant plain comes in as a harmonious part, for towards it the dashing, roaring torrents leap, there to lose their fierceness and calmly expend their energy in giving fertility and fruit.

Just so, the little things in the history of Old St. Thomas', and the incidents in individual lives belong to the general picture, to give it unity and harmony,

## PREFACE.

even to the borders distant by time and space, where the energy, begotten, born and nourished in Seminary days expended itself in magnificent work that must ever remain as a monument to the fruitful Mother Seminary of the West.

I send forth this book with no misgiving, for I know the spirit in which it will be received by the old students of St. Thomas', and for them I write. Others, from their own experience, may judge it differently, but we must remember that no other seminary has ever worked under similar conditions, or stood in the same relations towards its students and their definite work, as Old St. Thomas' with its students and the particular work for which it must, and did, give them a special training. To feel this fully one must have been at St. Thomas'.

The reader will understand this better after reading the book,—the story is not without interest; until then. I ask a suspension of judgment.

WM. J. HOWLETT.

PUEBLO, COLO., June 1, 1906.



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE AUTHOR .....	Frontispiece.
ST. THOMAS' SEMINARY.....	Facing page 13
BISHOP FLAGET, ET ALII.....	“ “ 23
FATHER BADIN.....	“ “ 30
FIRST CHAPEL AT ST. THOMAS' .....	“ “ 33
FIRST NAZARETH.....	“ “ 37
BISHOP DAVID.....	“ “ 50
BISHOP CHABRAT AND EARLY PRIESTS.....	“ “ 57
BISHOP FLAGET.....	“ “ 60
BISHOP REYNOLDS.....	“ “ 62
FATHER HUTCHINS.....	“ “ 103
FATHER CHAMBIGE.....	“ “ 112
EARLY PROFESSORS.....	“ “ 116
EARLY STUDENTS.....	“ “ 119
FATHER O'DRISCOLL, ET ALII... ..	“ “ 122
FATHER CRANE, ET ALII... ..	“ “ 124
SOME WAR STUDENTS.....	“ “ 130
MORE WAR STUDENTS.....	“ “ 139
FATHER ABELL... ..	“ “ 142
LATER GROUP ... ..	“ “ 149
ST. THOMAS' IN 1905.....	“ “ 157
STUDENTS OF 1869.....	“ “ 166
SOME ST. THOMAS' BISHOPS.....	“ “ 183
REPRESENTATIVE GROUP.....	“ “ 195

This picture was taken on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Fathers Bachmann and Disney in 1887, and represents priests of all years under Father Chambige.

Read from left to right:—Top row; Larmer, Disney, Bachmann, Murray, Hogarty, Harnist. Middle row; Kennedy, Reed, Lawler, Mackey, Moore, Siebenfoercher, Curran. Bottom row; Bolte, Pulcher, Russell, Tierney, Stick, Campbell, McConnell, Plaggenborg, O'Connor.

# CONTENTS.

	PAGE
DEDICATION.....	4
PREFACE.....	5
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....	8

## CHAPTER I.

The Sulpicians.—Their Work.—Bishop Flaget and Father David.—Providence and the Seminary.—Historical Effects.—Difficulties of Writing.—Regrets.—An Explanation.....	13
--	----

## CHAPTER II.

Early Religious Conditions.—The Sects.—The Preachers.—Discords and Divisions.—Growth of Infidelity.—Wane of Morality.—The Great Revival.—Orgies at the Camp Meetings.—United Opposition to Catholics.—The First Priests.—Their Field of Labor.—Their Hardships.—Their Unselfish Devotion.....	17
---	----

## CHAPTER III.

Better Conditions.—Bishop Flaget's Confidence.—The Seminary.—Its Moves.—Its Place in History.—First Inmates.—On the Ohio.—St. Stephen's.—The Buildings.—Early Log Cabins.—Taking Possession.—Sojourn at St. Stephen's.—First Steps.....	25
---	----

## CHAPTER IV.

Company in Books.—Poplar Neck.—The Howards.—Their Property.—Willed to the Church.—Named St. Thomas'.—Removal of the Seminary.—The Buildings. Sisters of Nazareth.—Robert A. Abell.—Some Events of His History.—Other Students.....	33
--	----

## CHAPTER V.

Student Life.—Manual Labor and Study.—Work, not a New Condition.—The Necessaries of Life.—Clothing of the Early Settlers.—Their Furniture.—Homes.—Food.—Father Nerinckx's Nays.—His Mistakes.—His Surprise.—His Philosophy.—Age of Tin and Homespun.—Scarcity of Money.—Thankfulness for Necessaries.—Pioneer Longevity.....	42
--	----

## CHAPTER VI.

Father David's Work as Teacher.—His Experience.—Writings.—Missions.—His Health.—His Work as Spiritual Director.—Bishop Flaget's Presence.—His Estimate of his Priests.—Intimate Knowledge of Good Material.—Father David's Sanctity.—Recreations.—Music.—Father Elliott.—The Ceremonies.—First Ordinations..... 50

## CHAPTER VII.

Temporary Shelters.—Love for the Simple.—New Church of St. Thomas'.—First Brick Seminary.—Bishop Dubourg and His Students.—Students Lodge with the Neighbors.—Fathers De Andreis and Rosati.—Famous Group.—Old and New Vestments.—First Stoves in Kentucky.—The New Cathedral.—Dedication.—A Co-adjutor.—Father David Appointed.—Leaves St. Thomas'... 59

## CHAPTER VIII.

Thoughts of New Seminary.—Circumstances of Its Realization.—Death of Hottenroth.—His Nuncupative Will.—Theologians Go to Bardstown.—St. Thomas', a Preparatory Seminary.—Boys' School.—List of Priests.—St. Joseph's and St. Mary's Colleges..... 68

## CHAPTER IX.

Wider Possibilities for Learning.—Narrower Prospects for St. Thomas'.—Some Early Students of the Colleges.—Boys' School Flourishes.—Brothers of the Mission.—Manual Training.—New Building.—Death of Father Derigaud.—Father De Rohan.—Rohan's Knob.—Priests Buried at St. Thomas'.—Peculiar Titles.—Partial Closing of St. Thomas'.—Dispersion of the Brothers.—Their Prospective Work..... 75

## CHAPTER X.

The Theologians at Bardstown.—Bishop Flaget Asks for Help.—The Rev. Dr. Kenrick Comes.—Cardinal Litta's Complaint.—The Rector's Answer.—Dr. Kenrick's Work in Kentucky.—Appointed Bishop.—Some of His Students.—St. Thomas' Seminary Unique in History.—Its Work.—Vocations.—Good Missionaries.—Native Clergy.—English Without the Idiom..... 83



## CHAPTER XI.

Less Interest in St. Thomas'.—Defection of Father Coomes.—St. Thomas' as a College.—Again a Seminary.—Its Possible Closing.—Peter J. Lavialle.—Death of Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds.—Death of Bishop David.—Teachers at St. Joseph's.—Classics at the Colleges.—Vocations Growing Scarce.—Priests of the Period.—Series of Vocations in Families.—Eloquence of the Clergy.—Quartet of Kentucky's Distinguished Sons.....90

## CHAPTER XII.

Reasons for the Decline of St. Thomas'.—Debt.—Loss of Dr. Kenrick.—Absence of Bishop Flaget.—Lack of Harmony.—Affliction of Bishop Chabrat.—Plans of Bishop Spalding.—Father Hutchins in Charge.—Debt Cleared Off.—Father Lavialle.—Appointment of Father Chambige.—Noble Band of Priests from Europe.—Last Call for Outside Help.—Pastors of St. Thomas' Church.....101

## CHAPTER XIII.

French Missionaries.—Incident in the Life of Bishop Flaget.—Sketch of Father Chambige.—St. Thomas' Opened, Domestic Arrangements.—Its First Years.—Growing Prosperity.—Increase of Students.—Stronger Faculty.—Students from Other Dioceses.—Prospectus of 1854.—New Building.—The Early Students.—The Survivors.—E. M. Bachmann.—First Preparatorian .....110

## CHAPTER XIV.

First Provincial Council of Cincinnati.—Provincial Seminaries.—Theological Seminary at Cincinnati.—Preparatory at St. Thomas'.—A Vanishing Generation.—Personnel of the Faculty.—Changes.—Father O'Driscoll.—Withdrawal of the Cincinnati Students.—War Times.—Dangers.—Morgan's Men.—Execution of a Soldier.—The Sick Confederate.—Sister Mary Louis.—Father Cooney.—Other Incidents and Inconveniences .....120

## CHAPTER XV.

Search for Contraband.—A Sick Boy's Imagination.—Strenuous Life.—Unity and Diversity.—The Debating Society.—Characteristic Names.—Chatty O'Brien.—Saxon and "The Bully Times".—Soldier

Priests.—Literary Golden Days.—“The Meddler”.— Previous Journals.—Strenuous Sports.—Earnest Study.— The Professors.—Religious Life.—Veterans of the War Period.....	130
--	-----

## CHAPTER XVI.

Looking Forward and Backward.—Father Abell's Golden Jubilee.—Visits of Bishops.—Examinations and Commencements.—Fast Trains.—Removal to Bardstown.—Father Russell.—Last Class at St. Thomas'.—Deaths.—Dismissals and Lapses.—“A Hole in the Fence”.....	141
--	-----

## CHAPTER XVII.

Changed Conditions.—The New Life.—Contrasts.— Vain Longings.—Father Abell and Dr. Pise.—Sylvan Studies.—Surroundings of Old St. Thomas'.—Diverse Impressions.—“The Angelus”.—An Orphan Asylum.— Buildings Unsafe and Abandoned.—Decay and Dis- appearance of the Buildings.—St. Thomas' in 1905.....	151
---	-----

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Going to St. Thomas'.—First Impressions.—The South.—The Seminary.—Father Chambige.—The Pre- fect.—The Students.—The Professors.—Some Human Traits.—Death and Grave of Father Chambige.—The Debating Society.—Recreations.—Food.—Spiritual- ities.—Pranks.—Excursions.—The Servants.—The Sis- ters.—St. Thomas' not Preternatural.....	163
---	-----

## CHAPTER XIX.

A Retrospect.—Changes.—Their Cause.—Pioneer Priests and Pioneer People.—Heroic Times and Heroes.—Learning Among the Clergy.—St. Thomas' to the Front.—Growth of the Church.—Giants and Their Successors.—Roll of Honor.—Special Claim for Remembrance.—Dignity of the King.—Judge Not.....	176
---	-----

## CHAPTER XX.

Provincial Seminaries and Diocesan Seminaries.— Revival of St. Thomas'.—Fatal Deficiencies.—Some Good Points.—A Modern St. Thomas'.—A Religious Advertisement.—Sacred Ground.—A Vocation.—A Long Road.—Successfully Traveled.—Humble Beginnings — Signs of a Vocation.—The Poor Boy.—Prayers for the Priesthood.—The Court of the Temple.—A Word of Thanks.—Finis.....	186
---	-----





ST. THOMAS' SEMINARY.



## CHAPTER I.

The Sulpicians.—Their Work.—Bishop Flaget and Father David.—Providence and the Seminary.—Historical Effects.—Difficulties of Writing.—Regrets.—An Explanation.

Foremost among the great educators of the clergy in modern times have been the Sulpicians. With the opening of their seminaries a change came over the clergy of France, and a Catholic, Roman and Apostolic clergy began soon to succeed to a clergy somewhat imbued with Jansenistic, Gallican and aristocratic ideas. The old clergy were thorough royalists, jealous of their national privileges, and slightly suspicious of the encroachments of Rome. In matters of faith they upheld the defined doctrines of the Church, but in practice there was yet much of the old rigorism of the Jansenists and not enough of encouragement to piety for the love of God. Belonging, at least indirectly, to the governing class, they had a tendency to look and labor upwards, rather than for and among the poor and lowly. The spirit of the Sulpicians was the spirit of St. Paul that made him all things to all men that he might save all, and to spend most gladly and be spent for the salvation of souls.

To educate and form priests in this spirit was the object of the formation of the Society of the Priests of St. Sulpice, and it has faithfully adhered to the original object of its call into existence. A Sulpician may be deflected for a time from this special line of action, but he will go back to it, or order his life so as to keep in touch with his original calling.

It would seem natural, then, that Bishop Flaget and Father David, both of whom were Sulpicians, would plan a seminary soon after going to Kentucky. The necessities of their situation did but hasten the work. Kentucky must have priests, and it needed only just such priests as were formed after the Apostles; it could get but few from the outside; then it must supply them itself: hence, a seminary was imperative. They were Sulpicians, trained for the work, and Providence had sent them where the near future, and the far future as well, promised an abundant harvest, if reapers could be supplied. If they could establish a seminary and imbue it with the spirit of St. Sulpice, the ripening harvest would be saved; and, if they could endow it permanently with the same spirit, future and more abundant harvests would also be gathered in.

They came and established their seminary; they supplied the reapers as they were needed, and little, if any, of the good grain was lost to God in the rich harvest of those early days of the Church of Kentucky, nor were the hopes and prospects of those earlier years disappointed in the fruits of later times. No Catholic, who is familiar with the history of the Church in Kentucky, doubts that Bishop Flaget and Father David were men directly designed by Providence for the Kentucky missions, and the same history shows us clearly that Old St. Thomas' Seminary was an institution coming very closely under the special designs of God. It was founded in the spirit of the Sulpicians, and, with the blessing of God, their spirit never left it.

Without St. Thomas' Seminary the history of the Church in Kentucky would probably remain unwritten, for there would be very little to write, and other denominations might be pointing with pride to many

of the dead and the living in whose names we glory today. Had other localities been favored by Providence with Flagets, and Davids, and St. Thomases, we would not so often find men bearing the names of the Joyces, the McCabes, the Coyles, the Byrnes, and others of Catholic ancestry railing against the Catholic Church from Protestant pulpits. When Father Badin came to Kentucky there were only thirty-five priests in the whole of the United States; when Father Badin died St. Thomas' Seminary had given more than double that number of priests to his original mission. If this was not the work of a special Providence, to what shall we attribute it?

A hundred sketches of Old St. Thomas' Seminary and of those connected with it, are easy to write, but a single complete history is impossible. The men who made that history were too humble to imagine that they were making history, and too busy to record it, even if they had any thought that their works were worthy of record. Their humility, in later life, made them loth to speak of their works when approached by those who wished to preserve in writing the memory of their early deeds. If all could be known, what a mine of wealth we would now have of deeds, dates, persons and things for writing the history of every one of the early institutions connected with the Catholic Church in Kentucky! As it is, there is a great deal of obscurity surrounding the origin and early struggles of many of those institutions, and a competent knowledge of them dates only from the time of their greater prosperity. The history of St. Thomas' is gleaned from a few early chronicles where it is found in scattered fragments, from allusions in the correspondence

of men long passed away, and from the personal experience of those still living, and their recollections of former traditions.

It has been a source of regret to the old students of St. Thomas' that no systematic attempt was ever made to trace out the life and work of their old *Alma Mater*. They know better than it can be told to them and far better than others can realize, the pleasure, and the renewal of strength that come to them, when, in their occasional meetings, they forget the intervening years, and, laying aside the burdens of the present, they enter again into dear old St. Thomas' and live, for the time, the old life of innocence, of boyish hopes and labors, and even of boyish pranks and peccadilloes. The laughter of their youth is heard again, and not in echo only, and they actually enjoy the hardships that they thought were once theirs, and treasure them as a part of a pleasant past. The bond of brotherly love is strengthened, and their spirits begin to glow again with the zeal of the young and anxious levite.

To record many of these things may seem trivial, but they were a part of lives that were earnest, and are like little breathing spells between seasons of hard labor. To collect these has been my care; to collate them in presentable form will be for me a labor of love in my leisure hours. I choose to write this in my own style and person, not with the desire of obtruding myself upon the reader, but, because by so doing, I can get closer to my subject and speak more from the heart. This also will do away with all foot-notes and allow me to incorporate into the text matters that would otherwise find a place only in the margin. If, in doing this, I am violating the rules of the historian, let it be remembered that this is not intended as a history along technical lines, but as a Historical Tribute.



## CHAPTER II.

Early Religious Conditions.—The Sects.—The Preachers, Discords and Divisions.—Growth of Infidelity.—Wane of Morality.—The Great Revival.—Orgies at the Camp Meetings.—United Opposition to Catholics.—The First Priests.—Their Field of Labor.—Their Hardships.—Their Unselfish Devotion.

A glance at the sort of religion that prevailed in Kentucky in the early days shows it to have been a compound wonderfully and fearfully made up. Some idea of it is necessary in order to understand the nature of the work of our early priests, and the conditions that confronted them and their flocks everywhere. No amount of mere ignorance can explain the bitter, unreasoning and persistent opposition they met, without supposing also a state of degradation and hypocrisy incredible in our days.

When Father Badin came to Kentucky he found about 300 Catholic families among the 100,000 population of the state. These had settled mostly in groups, and to this fact is due, in great measure, the preservation of the Catholic religion among them and their descendants. Among the others, there were not many professed infidels. There were many who believed in Christianity but did not belong to any church, but those who belonged to the sects were religious with a vengeance. The Baptists, the Methodists and the Presbyterians were the strongest of the sects, in the order named. These denominations bitterly opposed each other on what they called their principles, until, as their own historian said, they were in a fair way to

destroy both the spirit and practice of religion, and sink it into contempt. The ministers boasted of the soundness of their principles, but lived ungodly lives. The money making and speculating spirit of the Presbyterians was lamented by many of their own people, but they consoled themselves that the Baptists were no better. The churches did little for the preachers, so they had to resort to other means to live, and they did this so successfully that there were not many among them who were poor. They were generally better off than the common people, and some of them became very wealthy. Their principles never stood in the way of a good bargain, and whole congregations were sometimes split up and torn to pieces on account of the questionable honesty of the preachers. When a good situation became vacant, the rivalry among the ministers for it was often so great that the most bitter animosity was engendered, and many a new sect owed its origin to this cause.

Personal opinions and local practices separated the Presbyterians into two great camps and several smaller outposts. The regulars wanted ministers with some education, while the Cumberlands licensed any good talker who desired to preach, with no regard to educational acquirements or doctrinal soundness, and many such exhorters were developed in the numerous revivals then held. The former held to the Profession of Faith, the latter held this to be of human composition, and accepted it only so far as they found it to agree with their own interpretation of Scripture, and every man interpreted Scripture for himself or accepted the interpretation of his favorite preacher. Fac-

tions arose, meetings were held, and the deposing of ministers was gone through in form, and excommunications were hurled as fiercely as ever reputed done by a medieval Pope. Personal accusations were common, and charges of slander preferred. The deposed and excommunicated ministers were not much troubled, but set up for themselves and continued preaching their opinions to all who would listen. From such causes came the Cumberland Presbyterians, the New Lights, the Stoneites, the Disciples, the Christians, the Reformers, the Campbellites, and still other minor sects and factions.

The Baptists were not more united than the Presbyterians, and became Open and Close Communion and Ironside Baptists, and United, Separated and Regular Baptists. They also joined other sects and were especially strong among the Campbellites.

Dissensions were not so marked among the Methodists, for they were but a loose organization which allowed almost every liberty of belief, providing one was a professing Christian. Then there were the disciples of Ann Lee, who believed that the millenium had come, who condemned marriage, lived in common and taught that the Word was communicated to the man Jesus, and the Holy Ghost was incarnate in Ann Lee.

The consequence of such divisions, with the hatred they caused, and the prevalent lack of sincerity, honesty and morality among the preachers, was, that many doubted all religion and looked upon it as nothing but a delusion, and a disorder of the passions; that it arose from the temperament of the body, or was excited by passionate addresses, physical exertion and

the like. Too many concluded that there was nothing in it, and the only way was to make the most of life, so vice ran rampant. This was the condition among the older people, and it is said that the young freed themselves from every religious restraint and rejoiced in their liberty.

Every line of this picture is drawn from Protestant authority, and much more might be added from the same source, but this is sufficient to explain the antics, the immodest and blasphemous gymnastics and the animalism of an insane fanaticism that defiled not only Kentucky, but other states where similar conditions prevailed.

The Great Revival began, when thousands "got religion" during, what was called, this "astonishing and precious work." The fiery campaign of the camp meeting began, when "thousands of people might be seen and heard at one and the same time engaged in singing and praying, in exhorting and preaching, in leaping and shouting and in conversing and disputing." Some laughed, some cried and some crawled on the ground like the old serpent, while others stamped on them to crush their head. Others played marbles in the churches or rode up and down on broomsticks to become like little children. Many got a jerking religion, or a falling religion, or a jumping religion, or a running religion, or a climbing religion or a barking religion. Some "treed their Saviour" and barked like dogs at the foot of the tree, or climbed the branches to catch him, while others did the same thing for the devil. They groaned and prayed and confessed that they had been sinners, but gave glory to God that they were now saved. Men and women



embraced and rolled together on the ground in open day, and the nights were made hideous by orgies too shocking to be described. The preachers were united, soul and body, in promoting these assemblies, and took part in every form of this so-called manifestation of religion, encouraging by word and example the crowds in their exhibitions of camp-meeting holiness.

This religious fever lasted for years, and a mild form of it breaks out yet here and there where common-sense civilization has not leavened certain communities.

Some actually believed that this was religion, but thousands attended those gatherings through curiosity and worse motives. The results were just what might be expected, and in 1820, Kentucky had only 40,000 church members, apart from the Catholics, in a population of 564,000. There were two hundred preachers in the state, preaching almost as many forms of doctrine, but united in two things, namely: that revivals were the highest expressions of experimental religion, and that the Catholic Church was the center of ignorance and idolatry, the harlot of Babylon, the crucifier of Christ and the kingdom of Satan on earth. They never failed to unite in a love-feast when the Catholic Church was to be served up, and they carved and dismembered it and stripped every particle of meat from its skeleton, and, with sanctimonious horror, they held it up for one last public execration before they buried it fathoms deep beyond the hope of all resurrection.

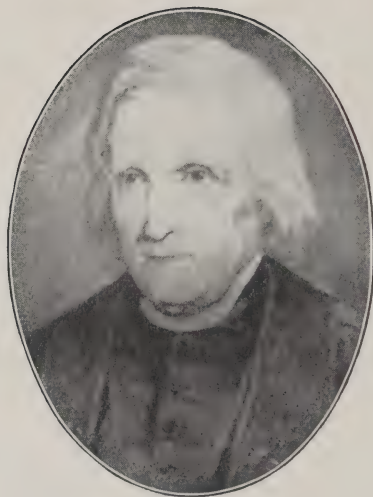
If the preachers were men of any standing in their own communities, and commanded the following that belongs to leaders, they would have inaugurated a public persecution of the Catholics in Kentucky long

before their bigotry and hatred broke out into open violence and bloodshed behind the cloak of politics. As it was, there was a continual opposition, and an effort made to draw the Catholics away from their faith, and there can be no doubt that many of the isolated families, and the younger members of other families, yielded to the ridicule and misrepresentation, or were led away by passion and the ease of its gratification outside of the Church. The fewness of the shepherds in those early years, rendered it impossible to guard all the scattered members of the flock against the onslaughts of the wolves.

From all this we can judge of the position of the priests in Kentucky during almost all of the first half of the last century. That they were allowed to live was because their enemies could find no specious pretext for killing them. That this is literally true, we know from the fact that, when Father Whelan, the first missionary to Kentucky, was brought into court in a case of spite, one of the jurymen said that they tried hard to have the priest hanged, and were sorry they could find no law for it. What sort of men were required to face such a condition of affairs, and where could they be found? Well, Kentucky itself furnished the men, and St. Thomas' Seminary prepared them for the work in a manner that will be developed in the course of this sketch.

The conditions that, for years, surrounded the early Catholics of Kentucky were not pleasant ones. At first, few in numbers, they had to depend upon their previous deposit of faith for their own perseverance and the instruction of their children. Their first priest was Father Whelan, who remained with them but a





RT. REV. B. J. FLAGET.



REV. CHAS. NERINCKX.



REV. S. T. BADIN.



little over two years. After an interval of six months, Father de Rohan came, and ministered to them in a limited way until the arrival of Father Badin in 1793. With the occasional assistance of others, one of whom was the Rev. Anthony Salmon, whose life was evidently shortened by the inhumanity of one who probably called himself a Christian, Father Badin labored alone for twelve years, when he received a co-laborer in the person of the Rev. Charles Nerinckx. Father Nerinckx was one of those exiles whom an un-Christian persecution had driven to our shores. He spent his subsequent life, and a fortune, in Kentucky, in work that brought him only the returns coveted by the saints. For his own worth he is deeply and deservedly revered, and his works live after him.

These two, for years, did the best they could for the Catholic settlers, scattered and in colonies, from Lexington to Breckenridge and from Louisville to the Green River. They virtually lived in the saddle, and almost performed the miracle of multi-location, so rapid were their movements. The work they did was enormous, but what they had to leave undone is almost beyond the power of our imagination.

Surrounded then, as the Catholics were, by a hostile element in those who should have been their friends and helpers in the common effort to establish civilized and Christian homes in a far-off wilderness, they might be excused if, at times, they almost despaired of perseverance, and were tempted to yield to the allurements that were offered them in exchange for their faith. That they did so in any considerable numbers, we have no proof, but we have abundant proof that the vast majority of them remained true to

God and their Church, and were filled with the keenest joy, when the news reached them that a Bishop was coming among them to provide more abundantly, and permanently, for them in their spiritual necessities.

The condition of the priests in those days can hardly be realized now. Their work was continual, and of the most wearing kind. Their food was poor and coarse, prepared by anyone and everyone and taken at irregular times. Companionship they had none, and, besides the solicitude of all their missions, they had to bear the ill-will and constant antagonism of narrow-minded people and preachers. Nothing but the most heroic devotion, and the strongest and purest charity, could compel them to such labors and sacrifices. It was not always a matter of necessity. The Spanish Governor offered Father Badin a residence at Cahokia, with a cash salary of \$500 a year and valuable perquisites, yet he chose to remain in Kentucky. How long would one of the preachers "rassle with the Lord in prayer" before deciding that such was a call from the Holy Ghost?

This birdseye view of the religious condition of Kentucky will give a juster appreciation of the progress of the Church in Kentucky, and of the cause and means of the preservation and spread of the faith.

### CHAPTER III.

Better Conditions.—Bishop Flaget's Confidence.—  
The Seminary.—Its Moves.—Its Place in History.—  
First Inmates.—On the Ohio.—St. Stephen's.—The  
Buildings.—Early Log Cabins.—Taking Possession.—  
Sojourn at St. Stephen's.—First Steps.

The perusal of the preceding chapter might lead us to think that the idea of a seminary in Kentucky was wild and impracticable. Things, however, had changed a little for the better at the time of the arrival of Bishop Flaget. The sects, it is true, were in the heyday of their religious activity, but the Catholics had grown by immigration and natural increase, until they numbered about 1,000 families. There was no wealth among them, but they had faith and courage, and stood united, and this forced an external respect from their non Catholic neighbors. The thought of a seminary in their midst was far from them. Such institutions were for populous centers and cultured communities, and supposed more wealth, a higher education and a greater refinement than existed in a newly-settled country like Kentucky. A seminary was a place for the preparation of priests, and the aspirations of Kentucky parents for their home-bred and forest-trained sons had not soared to such heights. But "the spirit breatheth where he will," and "the weak things of the world hath God chosen that he may confound the strong," for with God "neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth; but God who giveth the increase." Bishop Flaget must have felt this when he began his work in

Kentucky with a seminary, and his confidence was richly rewarded.

The early philosophers taught while walking about; the early missionaries were circuit riders; the early seminary was peripatetic. It began on the Ohio river in a flatboat, it rested for a time at St. Stephen's in Marion county before it moved to St. Thomas' in Nelson county, where it remained with some slight oscillations between St. Joseph's on the one hand and St. Mary's on the other, for nearly sixty years, when it was given the rest of an honorable old age, and its work was taken up by fresher hands with improved methods at Preston Park in Louisville.

St Thomas' was old and would now be considered old-fashioned, but it did its work well, and its memory merits to be treasured among the precious souvenirs of Catholic Kentucky, and its history deserves to be written near the top of the page of the book in which are recorded the rise, the progress and the triumphs of Kentucky's Catholicity.

The birthday of St. Thomas' Seminary was May 22, 1811. It was born on a flatboat at the Pittsburg docks, when Bishop Flaget, Father David and several young students went on board to proceed to their future home in far-off Kentucky. Father David, speaking of the foundation of the Seminary, says: "He (Bishop Flaget) arrived in Baltimore in July 1810, accompanied by a subdeacon and two young laymen, the elements of his seminary, with which I had already been charged by Mr. Emery, the Superior-general of the Sulpicians."

According to Clarke, in his "Lives of the Deceased Bishops," those who accompanied Bishop Flaget from

Europe where Rev. Simon G. Brute, Guy I. Chabrat, who was in subdeacon's orders, and Messrs. Deydier, Derigaud, Romeuf, and a young deacon whose name is not given, but who afterwards joined the Jesuits at Georgetown. He places their arrival in Baltimore on August 10, 1810.

Father Brute, immediately upon his arrival at Baltimore, was made professor of philosophy at St. Mary's Seminary. Of Mr. Romeuf there is no further word; he probably became a Jesuit and labored on the Maryland missions.

Anthony Deydier is thought by some to have accompanied Bishop Flaget to Kentucky, and the fact that he was for many years a priest at Evansville, Indiana, gave color to the supposition. Such, however, was not the case. Upon his arrival in America, he entered Mount St. Mary's College at Emmitsburg, Md., where he remained studying and teaching until 1834, when he accompanied Bishop Brute to Vincennes and was, by him, ordained a priest in 1837.

Mr. Derigaud was one of the young men who went to Kentucky with Bishop Flaget, and Peter Schaeffer, a Belgian, was another. The Bishop, most probably, found Mr. Schaeffer during the previous winter at Baltimore and induced him to volunteer for the Kentucky mission. Bishop Flaget, writing in 1820, says: "Towards the end of April, (1811,) I set out for my diocese with *four* young seminarians (two of whom were French) and a Sulpician-my friend and confrere-who was their superior." These several accounts differ in some minor details, owing, perhaps, to slips of the memory or of the pen, but they all agree in substance. If there was a fourth seminarian there is no record to-



day of who he was, or of what became of him. In fact, most of the traditions lead us to believe that the seminary was begun with three seminarians, Chabrat, Derigaud and Schaeffer.

A Canadian priest, Father Savine, joined them at Pittsburg. He remained only a few months in Kentucky, when he was sent to Cahokia. In 1814 Bishop Flaget visited him at that place and, upon entering his cabin, found him "holding the handle of a skillet to make an omelet." He afterwards labored in St. Louis under Bishop Rosati.

Another priest to join the party at Pittsburg was Father Edward Fenwick, O. P., who was returning to Kentucky bringing some novices for his Order, among them, his own nephew, Nicholas Dominic Young. Father Fenwick accompanied Bishop Flaget on the boat, but sent the rest of his party overland with the horses.

Of their trip down the Ohio river Bishop Flaget speaks as follows: "The boat, on which we descended the Ohio, became the cradle of the seminary and of the Church of Kentucky. Our cabin was, at the same time, chapel, dormitory, study-room and refectory. An altar was erected on the boxes, and ornamented so far as circumstances would permit. The Bishop prescribed a regulation which fixed all the exercises, and in which each had a proper time. On Sunday after prayer, every one went to confession: then the priests said mass and the others went to communion. Father David's health was in bad condition, yet he presided over all the spiritual exercises. After an agreeable voyage of thirteen days we arrived at Louisville, next

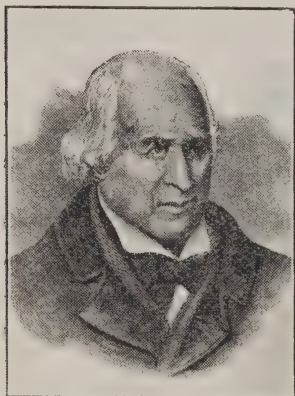
at Bardstown, and finally, at the residence of the Vicar-General."

That was a memorable voyage. A Bishop, three priests and three young men were turning their backs upon the blessings and comforts of civilization, and plunging into a wilderness that thenceforward was to be their only home on earth. Strictly speaking, it was not martyrdom, but it was closely allied to it. It was the breaking with a world that contained all their natural attachments, and which really offered an object for every worthy aspiration; it was the going into the unknown, where nothing was certain but labor and privation. And with what hopes of success? A thousand questions must have come to them, and all answered by a doubt. What kind of a reception would they get from the rough dwellers of the forest? Their seminary on the boat was one only by courtesy; would they ever have a better? Would any of the children of that rude and primitive civilization wish to join them? and, if so, would it be possible to fit them to become priests? The opinion is prevalent to-day in Continental Europe that the average American is first cousin to the savage. A worse opinion must have prevailed at that time. Think of clerics, and clerical training in Europe, and then think of a seminary in the wilds of Kentucky for her native sons! Would it be worth the sacrifice? Well, God sees. Forward, then, in His name! Such thoughts were inevitable, and it required heroism to go on and trust in God for success.

The party was met at Louisville by Father Nerinckx, who welcomed them on the part of the clergy. It was a small delegation, but the entire

diocesan clergy numbered only three, and one remained at the episcopal city of Bardstown to greet the Bishop upon his arrival there, and the Vicar General must remain at home to prepare a proper reception at the place that was to be, for the time, the official residence of the new Bishop.

The Vicar General, at whose residence they arrived, was the Rev. Stephen Theodore Badin, ordained at



REV. S. T. BADIN.

Baltimore on May 25, 1793, and the first priest to receive ordination in the United States. St. Stephen's, where he had his residence, was between Pottinger's creek and Hardin's creek, on what was called 'The Priest's Land, about four miles from the Church of the Holy Cross. Its site is now occupied by the famed Convent of Loretto in Marion county. It actually be-

longed to the Holy Cross mission, but Father Badin had erected a private chapel there for the greater convenience of saying mass when he was at home, and had dedicated it to his own patron saint—St. Stephen. In point of fact, it had almost become a separate mission, and mass was said there on Sundays, when about forty families attended regularly.

A description of the place has come down to us from the pen of Father Badin, and is as follows:—"Mr. Badin had for his own lodging but one poor log house, and, in consequence of the expenses he had lately in-

curred in building a house for a monastery, which was burned down ere it was completed, it was with great difficulty that he was enabled to build and prepare for the residence of his illustrious friend, and the ecclesiastics who accompanied him, two miserable log cabins sixteen feet square. One of the missionaries was compelled to sleep on a tick in the garret of this strange episcopal palace, which was whitewashed with lime, and contained no other furniture than a bed, six chairs, two tables and a few planks for a library."

The cabins, such as were built in those early days, were of logs cut in regular lengths, notched at the ends and dove-tailed together one above the other, to form the four walls. They were generally hewed flat on the inside, and the better class of houses had the logs hewed also on the outside. The chinks between the logs were filled with splints of wood, and mortar, or mud, was used to stop up effectually all crevices. In the absence of saw-mills, the roofs were covered with long split shingles, and the floors were made of logs split in halves, and laid close together with the flat side upwards. These were called punch-eons. The same material, with four stout legs at the ends, made excellent benches, and they have not quite gone out of use at the present day.

Bishop Flaget, with his seminarians, took possession of his new home with considerable solemnity. The manner of it is thus described by Father Badin:—"An altar had been prepared at the entrance of the first court, under a bower composed of four small trees, which overshadowed it with their foliage. Here the Bishop put on his pontifical robes. After the sprinkling of the holy water, he was conducted to the chapel

in procession with the singing of the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, and the whole function closed with the prayers and ceremonies for the occasion in the Roman Pontifical."

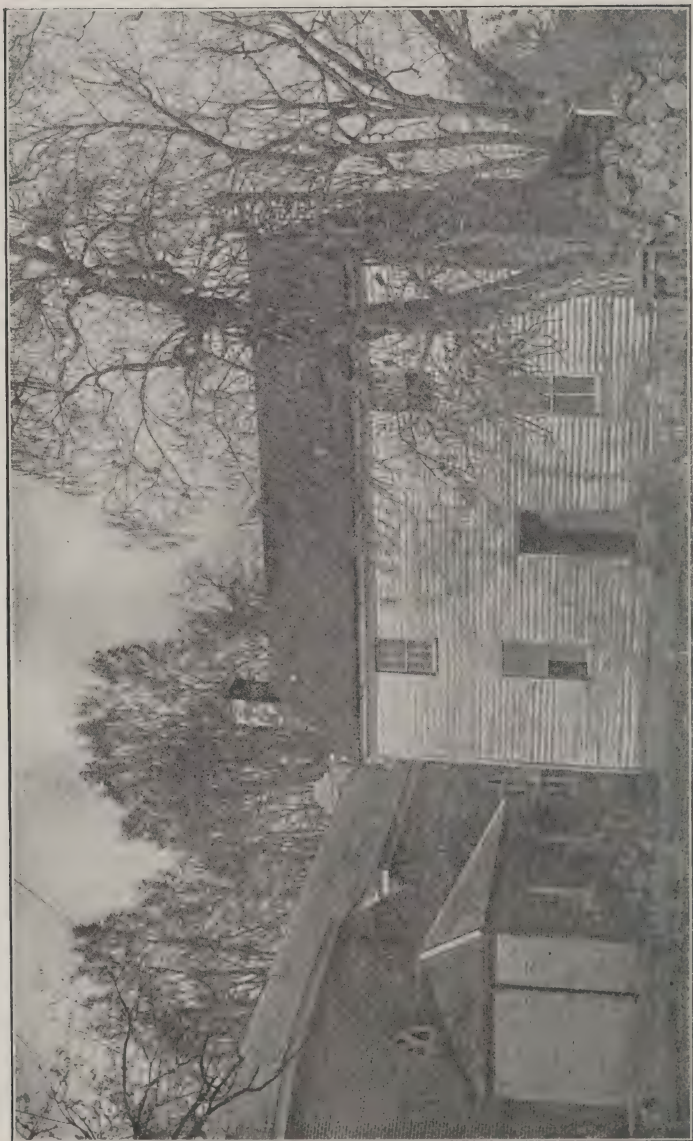
"In these primitive surroundings," says Father David, "our seminary continued for five months. The Bishop lived in a log cabin which had but one room, and was called 'The Episcopal Palace.' The seminarians lodged in another cabin all together, and myself in a small addition to the principal house."

Rome, Paris, and the great capitals of the Christian world had their seminaries, and these magnificent halls were built to equip men to preach the Gospel of Christ to the rich and the poor, to the learned and ignorant, to the civilized and the savage, and there was nothing superfluous in them. Well, Kentucky now had its seminary, and its work and aim was the same, but we smile at the comparison, and in order not to think of failure, we try to remember that St. Paul says that God chooses the foolish things of the world.

It was Bishop Flaget's desire; it is now his hope. The child, born at the docks of Pittsburg, and cradled in a flatboat on the Ohio river, is now essaying its first timid steps in the shadows of a Kentucky forest. No mother's hand is within reach to support it if it grows weak and totters. It is a child of no ancestry but a father in Bishop Flaget, and a guide in Father David, both of whom must find their own strength in God's Providence. May God guard and guide its course, and make it to grow in wisdom, grace and courage, as it grows in age, for it will need them all in a future that is ever to be marked with labor, hardship and sacrifice.







FIRST CHAPEL AT ST. THOMAS'.

## CHAPTER IV.

Company in Books.—Poplar Neck.—The Howards.—Their Property.—Willed to the Church.—Named St. Thomas'.—Removal of the Seminary.—The Buildings.—Sisters of Nazareth.—Robert A. Abell.—Some Events of His History.—Other Students.

Knowledge is the result of individual effort, the spirit of God is best sought in solitude, and material comforts count but little in the training of apostles. The three students in the huts of St. Stephen in the wilderness had ample occasion of testing the truth of these things. Yet they did not lack good company. They had Christ and his Apostles in the Scriptures, St. Thomas and the Fathers in theology, and all the Saints and great men of the past in history and biography. These, with Bishop Flaget, Father David and the other priests who visited them, left them no time to waste in vain longings for impossible things. They adapted themselves to their surroundings, and applied themselves to the work of their preparation as earnestly, and perhaps as profitably, as if they were at the center of Christendom.

St. Stephen's was the first location of the seminary only because it was the one place in Kentucky prepared to receive Bishop Flaget and his students. Its permanent home was to be on the Howard farm at Poplar Neck, about three miles from Bardstown. Distances, in the early times, were computed by the shortest trails. By the present roads we almost invariably find them longer than as given by the early records.

Edward Howard was the leader of a colony of Catholic emigrants who came from Maryland to Kentucky in 1787. His son, Thomas, was of the party, and they settled at Poplar Neck on the Beech Fork, which was a tributary of Salt River. With them came the Rev. Charles Whelan, an Irish Capuchin, who was the first priest to exercise the ministry in Kentucky. There are unauthenticated traditions that a priest from Ste. Genevieve, or the Kaskaskias, visited Kentucky previous to this time, and even that Marquette descended the Mississippi as far as Kentucky, but these traditions are too vague for anything more than mere mention. In any case, their rumored presence in Kentucky was only that of travelers, so that it is almost certain that the first Mass ever offered up in Kentucky was by Father Whelan, and very probable that it was in the house of Edward Howard, which afterwards became the Seminary of St. Thomas. In later years, Father Badin and the other missionaries made the Howard house the regular station for mass in the Poplar Neck settlement, and about thirty families attended the services.

The death of Edward Howard left his son in full possession of the Howard property. Thomas Howard had no children, and, being of a religious temperament, he desired that his property should go to the Church. This property, Father Nerinckx tells us, consisted of 400 acres of land, valued at \$5000.

In a manner, then, that provided for his widow, he willed the place to Father Badin, so that the Church in Kentucky should have the title and usufruct forever, but not the power to transfer, under pain of reversion to the collateral heirs. Of this prop-

erty Father Badin says:— “One month before his death Mr. Thomas Howard made me his sole heir, and it was only at my request, that two others were associated with me in such a manner that, if I were the survivor, I necessarily became the sole and rightful possessor. At his death I gave my bond and obligation for a pretty large sum of money to secure that property to the Church, and I assumed other obligations, besides the interests etc..” Later, some dispute arose between Father Badin and Bishop Flaget in regard to the transfer of the property to the diocese, but that was satisfactorily arranged, and the title finally vested in the Ordinary of the diocese in accordance with the idea of the testator. The name of St. Thomas had already been given to the station during Mr. Howard's life, in honor of his patron saint, and when the seminary was located there, it took, and ever afterwards retained the name of St. Thomas' Seminary.

Buildings were made ready at St. Thomas' for the students and Father David moved thither with them in November. Bishop Flaget, however, retained his residence at St. Stephen's although he spent much of the interval at the Seminary, until the following year when he transferred all his belongings to St. Thomas' in order to be with his seminarians and near his episcopal city of Bardstown, which, as yet, had no church or chapel. The nearest to it was the old church of St. Joseph, built about 1798, on the land that was afterwards, and is still, the burying ground for the Catholics of Bardstown.

The accommodations at St. Thomas' were not much better than those they had left at St. Stephen's. A little cabin of rough logs, used as a storehouse for



farming tools, was pointed out to us more than fifty years later as "The Episcopal Palace," but Bishop Flaget could have lived in this but a short while, if he ever did occupy it at any time. Another log building, 18x24, which, in later days did service as a laundry, was the house of the seminarians. In the loft of this the students slept, and it is related that, after stormy nights in winter time, they often found their beds in the morning covered with snow that had sifted through the crevices.

Of these two buildings nothing now remains, but there is a third, which, if not in existence then, must have been built immediately by Bishop Flaget and his seminarians. It was a log house of the better class, 20x32, in the upper part of which Bishop Flaget lived, and the lower portion was divided into rooms, one of which was used as a chapel until the completion of St. Thomas' Church in 1816.

Bishop Rosati of St. Louis, at a later date describes this building and the seminary building as he found them in 1816, thus:—"He (Father David) had then under his guidance twenty young ecclesiastics. They all resided together in a house constructed of logs, the crevices of which were filled with clay, which, in drying, became as hard as stone. The upper part, roofed with rough boards, served as their common dormitory. Not far from the seminary was the episcopal residence, also constructed of logs, but somewhat better put together. It was divided into two stories and a basement (cellar); the first floor contained three rooms, the largest of which served as a schoolroom and refectory. Fathers De Andreis and Rosati were located in the other two. The Bishop





FIRST NAZARETH.

had his room in the upper story, and near it was a small cabinet used as a library, and which he gave up to one of our band."

This house was afterwards covered with clapboards, and for years it served as the home of the Sisters who had charge of the domestic arrangements of the Seminary. It is still in use as the residence of the priest who serves the parish of St. Thomas, and is in a good state of preservation.

This building is of historic interest for another reason, for in its chapel on December 12, 1812, Teresa Carrico and Elizabeth Wells made the offering that constituted the first step in the founding of the Society of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. Bishop Flaget allowed them one-half of this house for a home, and an adjoining cabin served for further accommodation. They began their work by making, and caring for the clothing of those connected with the Seminary. In a few weeks, they were joined by Miss Catherine Spalding, and still later by others, so that in June 1813, they numbered six, and were regularly organized with Sister Catherine Spalding as first Mother Superior.

A new log house was built for them, with the assistance of the seminarians, at the distance of about half a mile from the Seminary. Another was put up the following year, and a school for girls was begun. In 1815, the Sisters opened their first boarding school, and soon afterwards, enlarged their establishment by the addition of two more buildings, one of brick and the other of stone. They still kept up their work for the Seminary, at least until 1822, when they removed to their present location at Nazareth.

There was always a kindly feeling between St. Thomas' and Nazareth—a sort of feeling of kinship, strengthened by the presence of the Sisters during most of the time that St. Thomas' existed. The seminarians, even to the last, cherished as one of their special privileges a visit to Nazareth at Christmas, or at the time of the annual exhibitions. Between the students of the two institutions, however, there never was any communication, nor was there ever shown any disposition to get upon speaking terms.

It is almost certain that no young men joined the little band while at St. Stephen's, but they were not long at St. Thomas' before the increase began. The first of Kentucky's sons to enter the Seminary was, in all probability, the young Robert A. Abell. This first student merits a short notice, both on account of his ancestry, and his own sterling qualities, manifested through a life of more than eighty years.

His grandfather was Samuel Abell, a Protestant, who was high sheriff of St. Mary's county, Maryland. Samuel Abell married Ellen O'Brien, who was a Catholic. The mother was allowed to bring up her daughters in her own religion, but the father would not permit that his sons' religion should be any but his own. When his oldest son, Philip, had grown to manhood, Samuel Abell took him to Leonardstown to have him sworn in as deputy sheriff. When young Philip was offered the test oath, which was equivalent to a renunciation of the Catholic faith, he refused to take it, saying that it would choke him. The father was furious, but suppressing his rage and chagrin, he returned home, and meeting his wife, he burst out:



"Ellen Abell, you have deceived me. In defiance of my known will, you have made Phil a Catholic. He has to-day brought disgrace upon me, and shown contempt for the law of the land and the religion of the State by refusing to take the oath of office. It is to you, deceiving and deceitful woman, that I am indebted for the shame that has this day come upon me." Turning towards him fearlessly, but with tears in her eyes, Mrs. Abell replied:—"Samuel Abell, I have never deceived you. Not once, since you took me for a wife, have I disobeyed you. If Phil has learned to respect the religion of his mother, it is to God's grace, and not to that mother's instructions, that both son and mother are indebted for a result that I have indeed hoped for, and prayed for since the hour of his birth," and, falling upon her knees, she raised her eyes and hands to Heaven and prayed: "I thank Thee, oh my God, that Thou hast remembered me in mercy. From a full heart I give Thee thanks that Thou hast led the son Thou gavest me to render obedience to Thy law rather than to that which Thy erring creatures have set up in the land." Samuel Abell died a Catholic.

A single incident will show the mettle that was in young Abell. The country school that he attended was to close one of its sessions with a debate. Champions for both sides were appointed, and preparation was going on for weeks. Young Robert was not one of the appointed debaters, but he studied the subject, thinking that he might get a chance to say something at the close, when remarks would be asked for from others. It so happened that the meal bin was empty on the very day of the debate, and his mother sent

him with a grist to the mill. So many were before him at the mill, that it was growing late when he got his sack of meal. If he went home with his load, and changed his well-worn clothes for more presentable ones, he would miss the debate, so putting his sack upon the horse, he started for home by the way of the school-house. The debate was in progress when he rode up, but, tying his horse, he edged himself inside and waited near the door until, at the close of the regular arguments, the chairman asked for volunteer remarks. A laugh went through the audience as this fifteen-year-old boy, his old clothes well dusted with cornmeal, came forward and mounted the rostrum. He began by excusing himself for coming in a garb befitting only a beggar, but he had to come as he was, or not at all. With this introduction he entered upon his subject. His hearers forgot his appearance in the flow of his argument, which gained for him, not only hearty and prolonged applause, but the decision of the debate. The chairman was so impressed with the talents of young Robert that he went to see Mrs. Abell and tried to induce her to send him to some college in Maryland. Her means would not permit this; the best she could do was to send him to the Dominican school at St. Rose's, and to St. Thomas' four years later.

More than sixty years after this incident, it was my pleasure to know Father Abell, and listen to his interesting talks upon subjects connected with the labors of the early missionaries. He never spoke in any boastful spirit of his own deeds. The experience of others was wonderful indeed, but his own works were made out only ordinary, and but natural for a descendant of Ellen O'Brien.

About the same time that Robert Abell entered the seminary, or within a short time afterwards, came Charles Coomes, Wm. Byrne, Elisha J. Durbin, Robert Byrne, Ignatius Reynolds, Philip Hosten, and others, until, in 1817, this singularly founded seminary numbered fifteen students, after having given several priests to the active ministry, Two of these—Fathers Abell and Durbin—outlived their Alma Mater, and died in peace laden with honor and good works.

## CHAPTER V.

Student Life.—Manual Labor and Study.—Work, not a New Condition.—The Necessaries of Life.—Clothing of the Early Settlers.—Their Furniture.—Homes.—Food.—Father Nerinckx's "Nays."—His Mistakes.—His Surprise.—His Philosophy.—Age of Tin and Homespun.—Scarcity of Money.—Thankful for Necessaries.—Pioneer Longevity.

To those familiar with student life in these days, the manner of life led by the early students at St. Thomas' will seem exceedingly strange and unusually harsh. It is true, that in no section of the country would the same rule be necessary at the present time, but conditions were such in Kentucky at that time that regular college life, if it were then possible, could not have been otherwise than far different from it as it exists to-day. This becomes more especially true, when we compare life at our modern seminaries with life at the struggling, little domestic seminary among the pioneers of Kentucky a hundred years ago. All conditions were then so primitive that anything like our modern institutions was less than a dream. What existed then was just what circumstances permitted. It was the best that could exist, and the work done then is the foundation upon which our present prosperity rests.

We get an idea of the life led by the early students of St. Thomas' from a few scattered remnants of writings left by their superiors, and the recitals of those of them who survived longest confirmed the record. Even then, the true idea is reached, only when we recall the general condition of the early settlers.

Of the early seminarians it is recorded, that they "made the bricks, prepared the mortar, cut the timber, etc., to build the Church of St. Thomas, the Seminary, and the Convent of Nazareth. The poverty of our infant establishments compelled them to spend their recreations in labor. Every day they devoted three hours to labor, in the garden, in the fields, or in the woods. Nothing could be more frugal than their table, which was also that of the two Bishops, and at which, water was their customary drink; nothing, at the same time, could be more simple than their dress." It is even said, that "one half to study, and half to labor was the rule of the Seminary at that day."

Such a rule, although impossible now, could not well be otherwise then, for those men were not the men to eat the bread of idleness, nor to drink the milk of charity without making a return. They were young men inured to labor from their earliest years, and had done their share of the work that had raised their own homes, not to any state of great prosperity, but to that condition where their further help could be dispensed with. As they had not been drones in the hive at home, they could scarcely allow themselves to be as burdens upon others when they could become even more than self-supporting. Hard as those conditions may seem to us, they did not frighten the hardy young Kentuckians, for Father David writes that, "in 1817, there were at St. Thomas' fifteen seminarians, of whom five were studying theology, and of whom but two were able to pay annually the sum of fifty dollars. The number might have been doubled, if the means of the Bishop had allowed him to receive all who had applied for admission."



Manual labor was not the only feature that marked a difference between student life at old St. Thomas' and that at latter-day establishments. Of what institution could we to-day write, in the sense that it was written of St. Thomas: "Notwithstanding the poverty with which the infant institution had to struggle, God watched over it, and His Providence did not suffer its inmates to want for any of the necessities of life?"

How faintly, at this day, do we get the force of that expression, "the necessities of life." With us it includes what, in other times, were rare luxuries, and things then unheard of are now so essential that we daily hear people say that they could not possibly get along without them. I speak not here of the comforts of the rich, but of things common to every class.

What were the necessities of life in the pioneer times of Kentucky? The early settlers had the necessities of life, yet a writer says: "The men dressed in homespun, moccasins and leather leggings for the lower extremities, hats made of splinters rolled in buffalo wool and sewed with deer sinews or buckskin whangs, shirts and hunting shirts of buckskin. A few dressed in Indian costume and wore nothing whatever but breech-clouts."

Their necessary furniture is thus described: "The furniture used in these primitive times, was all improvised on the call of necessity. It consisted, ordinarily, of a table fashioned after the pattern of a butcher's block; bedsteads constructed of upright and lateral sections of saplings, dove-tailed at the corners; wooden settles and three-legged stools. Wooden platters served the purpose to which earthen-

ware (?) is now devoted, and the easily cultivated gourd made an admirable drinking cup." Of their houses I have already spoken, and it is certain that there was nothing about their homes that was not of the strictest utility, and it is not probable that the settlers had carried the 700 miles of their emigration anything that their own handiwork could supply in their new homes.

Father Nerinckx, in 1807, lamenting some of the necessities of life, as they were understood in Belgium, wrote: "In a recent letter I described to you the *nays* of this country, viz:—no cheese, little or no vegetables, no wine, no beer, no oil, no turf, no bells, no sparrows, few or no singing birds, no mosquitoes, scarcely ever fresh meat, no stoves, no spices or fine herbs, no peaches, no fruit, with the exception of the wild apple and pear trees, no hedges, no ditches, no stone roads, no slate roofs, no floor or roof tiles."

Father Nerinckx was mistaken about some of the things enumerated. It was an exceptional stroke of good fortune for him that he had been two years in the country without making the acquaintance of the Kentucky mosquito. He was fortunate also, in being *fifteen* years in Kentucky without meeting a polecat, but fortune is a fickle dame, not always to be relied on. When, while traveling through the woods with Father Chabrat, he saw one for the first time, he tells us that they "hastened to surprise it." It is hardly necessary to say that they were the surprised party, and the surprise was sensibly present with them for two months. Yet, they could draw lessons from their misadventure, and say, "This proves better than musk the divisibility of matter. It also taught us not

to interfere with unknown things, and to keep away from them, even when their appearance charms us. Lack of this precaution has filled many a region with stench." Of such philosophic material were made the first priests of Kentucky.

The founding of St. Thomas' Seminary was not exactly in the days of the breech-clout, but shortly afterwards, when Kentucky had entered upon the age of the homespun. It is said of the Sisters of Nazareth, that they "spun and wove, and plied their needles from morning till night fashioning the garments worn by the seminarians." As there is no record of any particular dandy among the early students, it is probable that the Sisters did not get their patterns from Paris, London or New York.

Neither was it in the wooden age of table furniture, but in the age of tin, when, of the same Sisters it is written, that they took their "rye coffee served in tin cups, and dinner dished up on tin plates." As late as 1833, when St. Thomas' received secular students, each was required to furnish his own "tin goblet."

"Food that was scanty, and consisted, for the greater part, of bacon and corn-bread," was the fare of the Sisters, to whom would be allowed the delicacies of the kitchen and larder. The men, certainly, fared no better, but, as this seemed to be the ordinary diet of the times, there was no need of making any special mention of it in the case of strong, hearty men. From this we can get an idea of the meaning of the words of Father Badin, speaking of the seminarians: "Nothing could be more frugal than their table, nothing more simple than their dress."

It is stated that the seminarians worked. It is hard to understand how they could have lived without working. It would seem that it was a case of "work or starve." There was very little money in circulation in Kentucky in those early times, and Father David has already told us that only two of the students were able to pay the sum of fifty dollars a year. Look at this from the records of St. Pius' church, in Scott county: "We, the undersigned, agree to advance whatever money and *pork* may be needed to pay the workmen,—the same to be returned to us in rent of pews:—each of us to pay one-tenth in money and the remainder in *pork*." An interesting document may yet be seen in the archives of the Motherhouse of Loretto, of the date of October 2, 1812, upon which, in response to a call for assistance by Father Nerinckx, twenty-seven subscribers placed their names, and recorded their donations, which run from two bushels of corn to three of wheat, and from seven dollars in trade to a hundred weight of pork, and *two dollars* in money.

Probably a part of the tuition of some of the seminarians was paid in corn, and wheat, and pork, but they had to work to produce the remainder, and to build their houses and fashion a part of their furniture. Fortunately, daintiness was not a characteristic of the pioneer student, and, after his work, he could sit down and relish his corn-bread and bacon, and rye coffee. The forests held much of their game yet, and the Beech Fork could be put under requisition for Friday meals and Lenten fare.

Scarcity of money continued for a number of years, and was aggravated by the action of many who,

even in those days, considered themselves Captains of Finance. They organized a multitude of small banks, and issued their own paper money. A time of stringency came when they could not meet their obligations, and they failed, leaving the people holding their depreciated or worthless notes. This added much to the ordinary poverty of the people and made times unusually hard until about 1820.

No, the seminarians did not want for the necessities of life : neither did the first settlers, who gained them by pluck, perseverance and hard work ; neither did the Indians, who made that their hunting grounds only a few years before. Think of this, ye denizens of modern palaces, who stretch your limbs clothed in creased broadcloth and patent leather, under mahogany tables garnished with china and silver, and groaning under the weight of a modern market's choicest profusion : you, who tread upon velvet carpets, and sleep upon beds of burnished brass : think of it, and reason out, if you can, the motives that prompted such labor and sacrifice. Think of it, Priests of Kentucky, and bare your heads when you pronounce the names of those apostolic men who preserved and spread the Faith in Kentucky, and made possible the few modest comforts that you enjoy. Yes, they had the necessities of life, and furthermore, they thanked God for them.

It is sometimes a matter of wonder that so many of the early settlers of Kentucky lived to such an advanced age, yet the reason of it is clear, and lies in the simplicity of their manner of living. Their lamp of life was not burned at midnight banquets : their digestion was not paralyzed by foods killed in the



making and poisoned in the seasoning, and healthy exercise kept their tissue strong and able to resist almost every disease except that of old age. Their lives were patriarchal in their simplicity, and in their regularity ; they should also be somewhat patriarchal in their length.

## CHAPTER VI.

Father David's Work as Teacher.—His Experience. Writings.—Missions.—His Health.—His Work as Spiritual Director.—Bishop Flaget's Presence.—His Estimate of His Priests.—Intimate Knowledge of Good Material.—Father David's Sanctity.—Recreations.—Music.—Father Elliott.—The Ceremonies.—First Ordinations.

The burden of the seminary work fell to Father David. This meant the greater part of the class-work, and the spiritual training of the students. How he made himself equal to it, and did his work so thoroughly, God only knows. True, the older students assisted the new recruits in their early classes, but the advanced work was Father David's. No doubt Bishop Flaget gave instructions on religious subjects calculated to form his future priests to the virtues and practices of a religious life, but such lectures could be only occasional, as he had to visit his various congregations and do missionary work, besides the work of a bishop in a territory extending over seven States.

It was not only in the beginning that Father David had to labor single-handed, but for many years. The relief that he might have received, by training others to share the burden with him, was not granted to him, for, as soon as each student was sufficiently prepared to teach, he was sufficiently prepared for the priesthood, and the active service of the ministry called him by its more urgent needs, and he was sent out to do missionary work. It may be said that Father David was the sole instructor and teacher until



RT. REV. JNO. B. DAVID.



the arrival of Dr. Kenrick in 1821. Some little help was given him during these years by passing priests, but it was only temporary.

The course of studies at St. Thomas' was not as broad as in similar institutions now, but Father David was no superficial teacher of the sacred sciences. Deeply learned himself, he gave his pupils a deep insight into Theology, Scripture, Church Law and History, and a mental training that fitted them admirably for imparting divine truth to others, and defending it against its enemies. All of them had urgent need of such knowledge and training in their missionary career, and they never failed to do honor to their teacher.

Father David was fifty years of age when he began the work at St. Thomas', and he brought to it the ripe experience of years of teaching both in Europe and America. At the Sulpician Seminary at Angers, in France, he had spent four years in teaching Philosophy, Theology, Holy Scripture and other branches of ecclesiastical learning. Driven to America by the French Revolution, his first years were passed in mission work, yet in this he could not dispense with his profession of teacher, and he initiated what has since become a universal custom of the Church in America—the giving of special instructions in the form of parish retreats, or Missions. For two years he taught again in Georgetown College, and five years at St. Mary's, Baltimore. His work at St. Thomas' showed him to be avaricious of time, with no personal experience of the meaning of the word, idleness. Even his necessary moments of relaxation were not lost, for they were given to music, which he greatly loved and



in which he was more than ordinarily skilled. In the midst of his regular duties he still found time to write works of controversy, books of piety, his catechism, and a Catholic Hymn Book which he had published in Bardstown in 1815. An additional task was the direction of the growing Sisterhood of Nazareth. Besides these occupations, no small amount of work in the active ministry fell to his share. He was the pastor of the congregation of St. Thomas', and spent his Sundays and weekly free days in his parish duties. Once a month he attended Bardstown, and the vacations were spent in more extended missionary work. How his health, which was never robust, could have borne up under the multiplicity of his labors during all those years, is a mystery, yet he was never seriously ill, and he tells us that he warded off sickness by always carrying hunger with him as a physician.

In their spiritual training the students were directly under Father David. They had Bishop Flaget frequently in their midst, and the knowledge of his work gave them a good idea of what they should prepare for. His spirit of humility and tireless devotion to duty were silent teachers of lessons that they would soon be obliged to practice. He loved to be among them, both for their sake and his own. His ardent desire was that they should become missionaries suited to the times, and filled with the apostolic spirit. In his Journal he makes the following entry: "Recreation with the seminarians: I love to be in the midst of them. I reproach myself with not being sufficiently grave in their company. What happiness for me, if I could form a generation of holy missionaries!"

Yet, it was Father David who prayed with them, and taught them how to pray and meditate. It was he who instructed them in the essential principles of the spiritual life ; it was he who made them bear labor and mortification, and even to love them, as a preparation for a future of more effective work. Dr. Spalding says : " The young seminarians corresponded well with the paternal solicitude of their good superior. They caught his spirit, and entered heartily into all his plans for their spiritual welfare. They united manual labor with study. They cheerfully submitted to lead a painful and laborious life, in order to fit themselves for the ministry, and to prepare themselves for the privations they were destined to endure on the missions." He kept before their minds the object of their vocation, " I have placed you, that you may go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit may remain," He knew the difficulties of the hardest mission, and his aim was to train men who would not shrink from them. If the difficult missions could be cared for, the easier ones would cause no trouble.

That he succeeded in forming good priests, his Bishop bore testimony in one of his reports to Rome, where we find the following passage : " I come now to speak of my clergy. Oh, may God bless them. May He bless their continual sacrifices and generous devotedness. But, alas ! these young priests, so zealous and so charitable, become soon exhausted ; on them old age and infirmity come prematurely—the evident result of their long journeys and painful missions. Already many are enfeebled, and are left almost without resource. Whither will they go after labors so glorious ? Alas, I know not, and this is what causes my desolation."

Father David understood human nature and its wants, and he had the rare and precious faculty of reaching them in his work. His instructions were practical and to the point, and the prayers that he selected for use morning and night, were in the language of every heart, and they who were accustomed to them religiously clung to them during life. His treatise on "True Piety" was published in 1824, and went through several subsequent editions. During his lifetime an over-zealous author thought it wise to revise and improve Father David's book, but it was said to have been "improved for the worse," and Father David, with a smile, always referred to the books as "The False True Pieties."

A strong element of success in the work of Father David was the fact that he knew the young men who were under him, and he knew their homes and the circumstances in which they had been reared. He knew also, from his own experience, the conditions that would surround them in their ministry. He could tell them beforehand of the life that awaited them after leaving the Seminary, and nerve them for their actual work. In this way he prevented the building up in their minds of false ideas of the future, but strengthened their humility and continued working upon the foundations of self-abnegation that he found in their nature, giving them the expectation of the only reward that was really to come to them—the satisfaction of laboring for God and doing good to their fellow-men, with a proportionate weight of glory in Heaven as the ultimate prize.

Located in the very heart of the missions, St. Thomas' was admirably situated for carrying out such

ideas of missionary training, and, perhaps, the world might be sought over in vain for better material to work upon than the sons of the pioneers, whose whole lives and experiences were in the midst of such primitive surroundings. They knew no other sort of priestly life than that of the few priests around them, and the poverty of these, joined to their own, was a help, in that it tended to discourage feelings of pride, vanity and self-complacency.

There can be no doubt, however, that the personal sanctity of Father David contributed to the success of his work. He lived the life that produces saints, and God blessed his efforts accordingly. His pupils must have realized that they were under the direction of a man of God, for it must have been that holiness was stamped upon his countenance, since a critic, when looking at a picture of Father David thirty years after his death, could say, "His very likeness betrays the soul of a saint."

Of the amusements of the students in their recreations we know but little positively. Modern athletics were not then in vogue, but probably the axe, and the hoe, and the sickle were sufficient substitutes for modern appliances. Music was a rare accomplishment, and our college songs were not yet written. There was then no "Dixie's Land," no "Sweet Sunny South," no "Suannee River" or "Old Kentucky Home," but there were Father David's hymns, and Bishop Flaget said, that "their knowledge of church music suffered no drawback." There were some among them, too, who were tolerably fair musicians, and Father Elliott of the later ones was more than fair. He even composed hymns, and many of

his musical compositions were published in a hymn book which he compiled. When manipulating the little melodeon in St. Thomas' Church, in the sixties, the writer used Father Elliott's book among others, but he has tried many times since to find a copy of it without success. Father Elliott was not ignorant of music when he went to St. Thomas', as, in his youthful days, he sang in the choir at Holy Cross to the accompaniment of Clemmy Johnson's fiddle. Clement Johnson was an uncle of the late Sylvester Johnson of New Haven, Ky., who was a special benefactor of the orphans at St. Thomas' Asylum. In passing, it may be remarked that, when Father Elliott died, in 1871, his will showed two-thirds of his little property bequeathed to the orphans and one-third to the Seminary.

If their knowledge of church music suffered no drawback, neither did their knowledge of church ceremonies, for a young Propagandist wrote of them : " I avow to you, sir, that if ever I was penetrated with deep feeling, it was while assisting at the Holy Sacrifice in the Cathedral on a Sunday. Torrents of tears flowed from my eyes. The ceremonies, all performed with the greatest propriety, according to the Roman rite ; the chant at once grave and touching ; the attendant clergy pious and modest ;—everything impressed me so strongly, that I almost believed myself in the midst of one of the finest churches of Rome, which I had before thought could not be equalled any where else in the world."

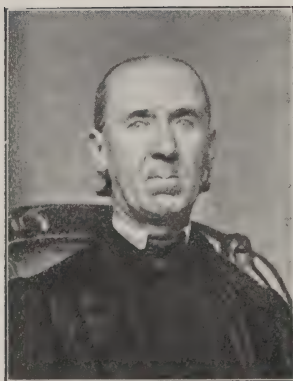
The first fruits of Father David's labors at St. Thomas' were reaped when the Rev. Guy Ignatius Chabrat was ordained to the priesthood. It is true



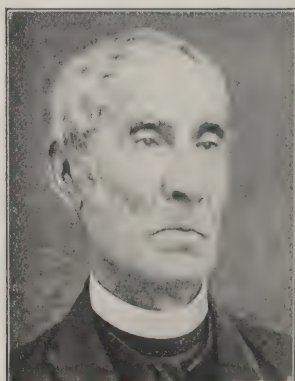




RT. REV. GUY I. CHABRAT.



REV. C. I. COOMES.



REV. A. A. AUD.

that Father Chabrat received the greater part of his clerical training in Europe, but the shaping of it with a view of working on the Kentucky missions was done at St. Thomas' Seminary, and St. Thomas' has always claimed him as an honored son, and taken no small pride in the fact that its first alumnus was clothed with the purple as a Prince of God's Church.

Where Father Chabrat received deacon's orders is not known, but it is probable that it was in the little log chapel of St. Thomas. When the time came for him to be raised to the priesthood, interest in this event had grown to a very great extent. No such ceremony had ever been celebrated in the entire West, and the desire to witness it was general. The little chapel of St. Thomas' would be totally inadequate to accommodate more than a fraction of the people, so Bishop Flaget accepted the suggestion of Father Wilson, the Provincial of the Dominicans at St. Rose's to use their more commodious church for the ceremony. Of this occasion Ben Webb writes: "On the twenty-fifth of December, 1811, a remarkable event took place at St. Rose. This was the ordination of a priest. Dr. Benedict Joseph Flaget, the newly consecrated Bishop of Bardstown, who had only reached his diocese the preceding spring, had brought with him a young French cleric, Rev. Guy Ignatius Chabrat, who was already in subdeacon's orders. During the intervening months, the young man had been gradually qualified to take his place in the ranks of the working clergy by that admirable master of the science of theology, Rev. John E. David. With the exception of the Dominican church, there was at the time no church in the State of sufficient

capacity to accommodate a great number of persons,— Catholics everywhere being anxious to witness the ceremony. Bishop Flaget gladly availed himself of Father Wilson's suggestion that the ordination take place at St. Rose. "

The time and place of the ordination of Father Schaeffer are not known, but probably he was ordained at St. Thomas' as early as 1814. Father Derigaud, the last of the trio of young men who came with Bishop Flaget to Kentucky, was ordained on Jan. 1, 1817, and was the first of the diocesan priests to be ordained in the new church of St. Thomas. Fathers Samuel and Stephen Montgomery, Dominicans, were ordained there in September, 1816. Kentucky began its long line of contributions to the clergy when, on the fourteenth of August, 1818, the Rev. Robert A. Abell, and the Rev. Charles Coomes were raised to the priesthood. From that time, the ordinations became of so frequent occurrence that they ceased to excite comment, or to merit special record.

## CHAPTER VI.

Temporary Shelters.—Love of the Simple.—New Church at St. Thomas'.—First Brick Seminary.—Bishop Dubourg and his Students.—Students Lodge with Neighbors.—Fathers De Andries and Rosati.—Famous Group.—Old and New Vestments.—First Stoves in Kentucky.—The New Cathedral at Bardstown.—Dedication.—A Co-adjutor.—Father David Appointed.—Leaves St. Thomas'.

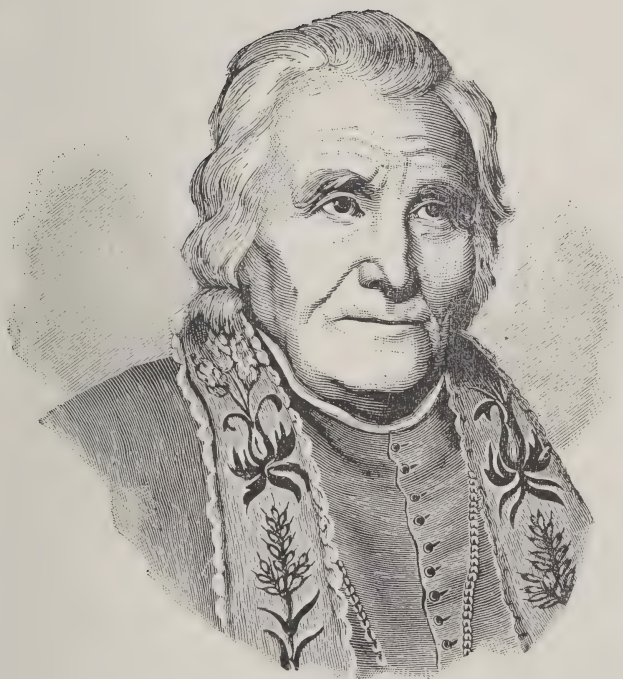
The simple beginnings of St. Thomas' met the necessities of the time and grew dear to those who began their years of study in them. They were but temporary shelters, but, such a familiar and home-like atmosphere surrounded them, that the men who once occupied them, ever afterwards recalled their memory with a special feeling. When no longer used for their original purpose, and falling to decay, their old occupants, upon their return visits to the Seminary, would go over them again and again, pointing out the spot where this one sat, or that one slept, and rehearsing the little incidents that some particular object would bring back to them. The old buildings seemed more suggestive of pleasant memories than the new ones, and to have a deeper hold upon their affections. Time may have mellowed the view, as it does to most of us who have the plainest of homes in the simplest of surroundings at the far-end of our retrospect.

The erection of the new buildings was not considered of such moment that any detailed account of it should be kept. We know that some time during the year 1816, the new Church of St. Thomas was completed. This was the second brick church ever built

in Kentucky:—a small brick church at Danville alone preceding it, but as that structure ceased to be used as a church many years ago, the Church of St. Thomas stands to-day as the oldest of all the brick Catholic churches in Kentucky, and, for that matter, in the entire West. In size its exterior dimensions were 35x70. It had some pretensions towards good style, and must have been a wonder to those who had never seen anything better than the little log chapels of the time. In material and workmanship it was better than most structures of the kind at the present day, and after nearly a century it is still used, and with proper care, will be fit for service for many years to come. The plan must have been Bishop Flaget's own, and it is more than probable that his venerable hands materially assisted in carrying it out. It was not designed for spire or tower, but it had a neat front that always appealed to me as "dressy", just up to the right point. The old Church of St. Charles, built in 1832, by Father Deparcq, was on similar lines, and there is even a suggestion of it in the body of the former Cathedral at Bardstown.

In the same year the first brick portion of the Seminary was built. These two buildings, Bishop Flaget reports, cost not less than twenty five thousand francs. It is of these two buildings that is was said, the seminarians made the brick and mortar, and it might be added, that they carried the hod and served the masons. The Seminary building was thirty two feet square outside, and consisted of a basement, two stories and an attic. Its rooms were small, but it was like a palace in appearance and comforts when compared with the old quarters.





RT. REV. B. J. FLAGET.

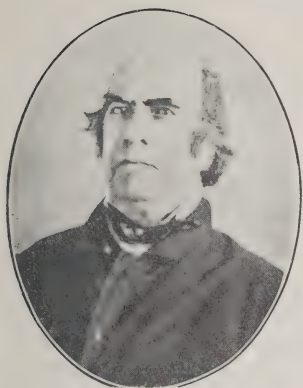


This will not conflict with Father David's description, for his were interior measurements, and the French first story (*premiere tage*) is the first above the ground floor.

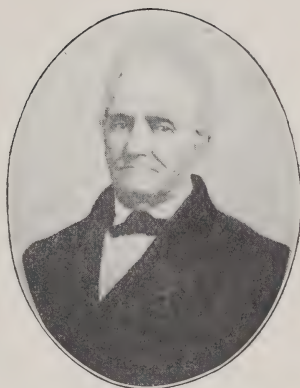
The completion of the new buildings did not mean, however, the abandonment of the old log cabins. In that year a number of priests and students, destined for the diocese of New Orleans, came to St. Thomas' to await the arrival of Bishop Dubourg who was in Europe. Among these were Fathers De Andreis and Rosati. The priests taught in the Seminary, studied English, and did some missionary work as soon as they were sufficiently familiar with the language. The students pursued their regular ecclesiastical studies, and the study of English at the same time. Both old and new buildings were utilized, and even then, with all possible crowding, the accommodations were insufficient for the increased number, and some of the home students were forced to lodge with the neighboring Catholic families.

Just previous to the arrival of Bishop Dubourg, Father Nerinckx visited St. Thomas', and he reported that,—“Here I met with Very Rev. De Andreis, Vicar-General of Bishop Dubourg, and founder of the Congregation of the Mission in America, who, with two Lazarists, Messrs, Rosati and Acquaroni, was waiting the arrival of the Bishop. Three Brothers of the Christian Doctrine and four Flemish students were staying at the seminary at the same time. The three Italian Lazarists were already at work on the English-speaking missions, and gave proof of great talent. One of them, Father Rosati, who is teaching dogmatic theology, gave a mission at Post Vincennes, and had the happiness of baptizing an Indian chief's son.”

What shall we say of the honor that St. Thomas' might boast of as belonging to it just at that time? As students in some capacity or other, besides the pioneers of Kentucky, there were the Very Rev. Felix De Andreis, Superior of the Lazarists, Rev. Joseph Rosati, future Bishop of St. Louis, Leo Raymond De Neckere, future Bishop of New Orleans, Ignatius A. Reynolds, future Bishop of Charleston. As guests, there were Bishop Dubourg of New Orleans, and the Rev. Anthony Blanc, afterwards the first Archbishop of the same diocese. As residents, there were Bishop Flaget and his future Coadjutor, Father David. As visitors, while this distinguished company was there, no doubt came Fathers Badin, Nerinckx, and Chabrat who became later Coadjutor to the Bishop of Bardstown, and it is natural to suppose that, coming to pay their respects, were the Very Rev. Father Wilson, Provincial of the Dominicans of St. Rose, with his confreres, Father Fenwick and Father Miles, both of whom afterwards became respectively the first Bishops of Cincinnati and Nashville. Add to this that, at the same time, among the Bardstown students, there were Abell, And, the two Byrnes, Deparcq, Durbin and others, and we have a view of a group, the equal of which is seldom gathered under one roof. In little, humble St. Thomas' the light of the Church in the West was concentrated preparatory to its bursting forth to illumine a world more vast than empires of old,—a new world, where the names of those gathered there that day would be set like stars in the firmament for the guidance and inspiration of of generations to come.



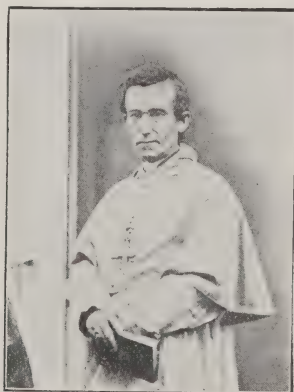
REV. JAS. ELLIOTT.



REV. W. S. COOMES.



RT. REV. I. A. REYNOLDS.



RT. REV. P. J. LAVIALLE.





In the general poverty of the times the churches had to content themselves with little in the way of vestments and altar furniture. All these things came from Europe, and the cost of transportation was almost prohibitive. The missionary's store of these things generally consisted of the necessities for mass, carried with him in a pair of saddle-bags. A single vestment was sometimes left as the permanent furnishing of some church, and none had more until Bishop Flaget came and brought the necessary paraphernalia for pontifical ceremonies. Even these were poor and simple, and it was only in 1817, that anything rich was seen even at the greatest festivals. In that year Father Nerinckx returned from Belgium and brought a large supply of vestments, which he had gathered by purchase and donation, and which he distributed among all the churches and religious houses in Kentucky. The richest set of these vestments, bought from a collegiate church in Brussels, Father Nerinckx donated to the future Cathedral Church of Bardstown, and Bishop Flaget used it for the first time at Pontifical Mass on Easter Sunday at St. Thomas'. Father Nerinckx saw the new church of St. Thomas for the first time after his return from Europe, and wrote to some of his friends in Belgium, that "the chapel, being as large and as well built as the one of the Seminary of Mechlin, the grandest ceremonies of the Church could easily be performed therein, the only drawback being the substitution of an old pianoforte in lieu of an organ." He makes mention of some twenty other chasubles given to the Seminary, among them a white set with dalmatics and copes, a black vestment with cope, bought at Mechlin, and a white

set with blue columns and embroidered cope, the gift of Mr. Peemans of Louvain, besides many albs and other linen articles, and a small monstrance.

These would be precious mementoes if any of them could now be found, but it is probable that nearly all of them were worn beyond repair in actual service. Other relics, as well as curiosities of the time, would be the first stoves used in Kentucky, which were brought in upon Father Nerinckx's order in 1814. They were shipped down the Ohio from Pittsburg, and cost \$100 apiece besides the freight charges. We, who class a modern range among the necessities of life, may find it interesting to speculate upon how the cooking was done before that time for a houseful of seminarians.

The first years of St. Thomas, were successful beyond reasonable expectation. There had been no lack of students; its name and fame has gone throughout the entire West, and its means had not only kept it up, but allowed many improvements. Its future, then, might be considered secure, and in this feeling, Bishop Flaget turned his attention to the work of building his Cathedral in Bardstown. St. Thomas had been his official home since 1812, and his real home when he was not on his official journeys, which, however, took up a great part of his time. He began early to prepare his plans. If his plans ever contemplated a removal of the See from Bardstown it is not known, but they adjusted themselves admirably to future events, and when the transfer to Louisville was made, they left a most perfectly arranged parish church at Bardstown.

The corner stone of the Cathedral was laid on July 16, 1816. The plans called for no elaborate or extravagant edifice, yet the work proceeded so slowly that more than three years passed before the building was ready for service. These were among the years of the greatest financial stringency caused by the many bank failures, and the raising of money for any purpose was a difficult task. It was not then completed as we find it to-day, either exteriorly or interiorly, but it was in such a condition that it could be used, and the further work on it would not interfere with regular service. Its opening took place on August 8, 1819, when Bishop Flaget dedicated it to God with the assistance of all the clergy of Kentucky, and in the presence of the largest concourse of people ever gathered together in Bardstown. The dedicatory sermon was preached by the Rev. Robert A. Abell, a native Kentuckian, who was ordained at St. Thomas' Seminary not quite a year before. The sermon was a masterful effort and evoked the most favorable criticism from all, and especially from the members of the bar of Bardstown, which at that time included many of the brightest minds of the country. Fifty years later saw the rare event of the same preacher at the semi-centennial commemoration of the dedication. On this occasion the venerable speaker did not attempt any style of oratory, but his simple words, as he recounted the glories of the past and told of the faithful lives of the first worshipers in that temple, called up the tenderest emotions, and his own tears but mingled with those of his entire audience.

The work of Bishop Flaget was such that alone he found himself unequal to the task. He, therefore,

asked for a Coadjutor, and recommended to Rome the selection of Father David for the position. The humility of Father David did not avail in enabling him to escape the honor, and reluctantly he accepted, notwithstanding the additional work that it would bring him. His consecration as Bishop of Maurocastro and Coadjutor to the Bishop of Bardstown, took place in the new Cathedral on August 15, 1819. Bishop Flaget was the only prelate present, and he was assisted in the consecration ceremonies by Father Nerinckx and Father Wilson of St. Rose.

Bishop David's work as Coadjutor did not call him outside of Kentucky. Bishop Flaget still assumed the burden of the remote visitations and left to Bishop David the direction of home affairs and diocesan duties. These, and the establishment of the theological seminary in connection with the new Cathedral, made it necessary for Bishop David to reside at Bardstown, and thus St. Thomas' lost the main support of its early struggles and its greatest guarantee of continued prosperity. Under him it had given at least six priests to the missions, and a score of others were almost ready for ordination, Nearly as many more were in the preparatory classes, and distant New Orleans and St. Louis were already reaping the benefit of its instruction. It was an extremely creditable record for an eight-year-old foundation whose corner stone, figuratively speaking, was laid upon a flatboat.

The event of the removal of the two Bishops to Bardstown was a double bereavement for St. Thomas'. For eight years it had enjoyed the prestige and prominence of a Pro-Cathedral and a Bishop's home.

That part of its life would henceforth be a sweet memory full of reverence and inspiration. As a Seminary it had lost Father David, whose hand had guided it, whose head had enlightened it and whose heart had gauged its own life's pulsations. As actual possessions these things were appreciated, but the full importance of them could be seen only when they were gone. Ever afterwards the students looked back to those days with a sort of holy envy, and they gave to St. Thomas' a consecration that made, and not in vain, a practical appeal to every seminarian.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Thoughts of New Seminary.—Circumstances of Its Realization.—Death of Hottenroth.—His Nuncupative Will.—Theologians Go to Bardstown.—St. Thomas' a Preparatory Seminary.—Boys' School.—List of Priests.—St. Joseph's and St. Mary's Colleges.—

As long as Bishop Flaget and Father David remained at St. Thomas' the seminarians formed but a single body with them at its head. When Bishop Flaget foresaw his own change of residence to Bardstown, and also that of Father David, he longed for some feasible plan by which he might have his more advanced students near him, where their presence and assistance would minister to the dignity and solemnity of the ceremonies of the Church, and where they would continue to be under the direction of that master of the spiritual life—Bishop David. The realization of such a plan was among the vaguest of his hopes, when a strange fatality made it an immediate possibility. A relation of this chain of circumstances I give here as I have gleaned it from accounts written shortly after the events therein described took place. The name of the unfortunate man was Hottenroth, and he was much thought of by Bishop Flaget on account of his singular piety and the zeal he displayed in every work undertaken for the good of religion.

When the Trappists returned to Europe in 1813, a number of those who had attached themselves to the Order in America, but had not bound themselves by any vows, remained in Kentucky. One of these, who had learned the trade of a clock-maker with the



monks, settled in Bardstown, where he opened a shop and applied himself very successfully to the exercise of his craft. His savings increased each year, and, as he had no near living relatives, he expressed his intention of leaving all that he possessed at death to Bishop Flaget for the Church. After the church at St. Thomas' was built it was his custom to ride out there to hear mass, as there was no priest yet located in Bardstown. On one of these occasions a violent rainstorm occurred, and, although pressed by Bishop Flaget to remain at St. Thomas', he, and one of his workmen who accompanied him on foot, persisted in returning to Bardstown. Arriving at the ford of the Beech Fork about a mile from Bardstown, they found the stream greatly swollen, and miscalculating its fury, they both mounted the same horse and entered the water. In mid-stream the current swept the horse off his feet, and both riders were plunged into the raging torrent. Unfortunately no help could be given them, and both were lost. The question of his property was taken up by the courts, and the declaration of the clock-maker, that Bishop Flaget should inherit his money, was pronounced a true nuncupative will, and about \$2,200 were given to the Bishop, who bought five acres of land adjoining the Cathedral property for 3500 francs, and began the erection of a brick building suitable for himself and his advanced seminarians. It had two stories upon a serviceable basement, and its rooms, though small, were well arranged and made a comfortable home for the first students of St. Joseph's Seminary at Bardstown. The same building, with slight alterations, was later made into an elegant home for the pastor of

the parish, and still stands as a reminder of the poverty and riches, and the glories and trials of the early ages of faith in the West.

Of the removal of the Seminary to Bardstown, Bishop Spalding, in his *Sketches*, says:—"In the year, 1818, Father David removed to Bardstown with a portion of the seminarians, of whom he was Superior. Many reasons induced this change of location. Bishop Flaget wished to reside in the place which was his Episcopal See, and he was desirous of being surrounded by his young seminarians, as a father by his children. The new Cathedral of St. Joseph was then in progress of erection, and the establishment of a college was contemplated. The services of the seminarians would be needed in the college during the week, and in the Cathedral on Sundays and Festivals. Such were some of the principal reasons for the removal of the Seminary from St. Thomas' to Bardstown." In a later work—*Life of Bishop Flaget*—, the same writer modifies this statement, saying:—"On the 7th. of August, 1819, the Bishop removed to Bardstown with his Coadjutor-elect. He left St. Thomas' with regret, and he often visited the place afterwards to bury himself in deeper solitude. On the 21st. of September, the Seminary was removed from St. Thomas' to Bardstown, now the residence of the two Bishops. These occupied apartments in the same building with the seminarians, and, for many years, ate at the same table, and as far as possible, performed all the spiritual exercises with them. It was a well organized family, in which the fathers lived in the midst of their children." This latter account is the one now generally received.

Only those students who were studying theology went to live at Bardstown, and of these there were sixteen to enter the new Seminary, while nineteen were left in the preparatory classes at St. Thomas'.

The immediate direction of St. Thomas' as a preparatory Seminary, was now entrusted to Father Derigaud, who had been ordained there in 1817. Although only a few years in the ministry, Father Derigaud was not a young man. He was somewhat advanced in age when he began his studies for the priesthood, and at this time he was about forty years old. As co-worker with him, and treasurer of the Seminary, the Rev. Charles Coomes was assigned to St. Thomas', and these two, with the assistance of some of the advanced students, kept the institution in active operation. Naturally, it did not continue with the same prosperity of former days before the division of its strength, and its subsequent existence was uneven and precarious until a new Father David was raised up by Providence to revive and continue the work of that master-teacher of apostolic life. This did not take place until 1850, when a most worthy successor to Father David was found in the person of the Very Rev. Francis Chambige. It is true that St. Thomas' was running, and doing good work at intervals during that time, but its great periods were those when its direction and destinies were under Father David and Father Chambige.

The zeal of Bishop Flaget was not bounded by the limits of the present. He looked into the future and felt that much of its security depended upon a proper education of the young. But his people were poor, and in his poverty he knew how to sympathize with

them. If schools could be established he would lead the way, and go farther than others were required to follow. St. Thomas' was not now filled to its capacity, and he might utilize a part of it for his cherished idea. With his clerical students, then, he opened a free school for boys at St. Thomas', and the success of this first venture gave him no little pleasure, and raised up hopes for the future. Of this school he wrote in February, 1820: "We have made a trial effort in opening a free school for poor Catholic boys who have not made their first communion. The half of their time will be employed in work on the farm, to defray the expense of their board, and the other half in learning to read and write and being instructed in the catechism. Although it is in operation only three months, many have had the happiness of receiving holy communion with the greatest devotion, and one of them has entered the preparatory seminary with the intention of becoming a priest. With fifty schools like this we could renew the face of the whole diocese."

Others came also to begin their studies at St. Thomas', and their number reached twenty-five before the close of the year, 1820. They were of the same self-sacrificing class as the earlier students, and carried out the same rule of alternate work and study. Of them Bishop Flaget wrote, almost in the words of the early chroniclers of the first years of the existence of the Seminary: "At present there are twelve students in the higher seminary, some studying logic, others theology: and twenty-five in the preparatory courses at their humanities. We have not only to educate these poor children gratis, but we must furnish them

with all the necessary books, etc., and board and clothe them. Nothing is more frugal than their table, and nothing is poorer than their every-day clothes. Yet, in spite of this rigorous economy, it would be absolutely impossible for us to care for so large a number if they did not lessen our expenses by manual labor."

At this time the diocesan clergy in Kentucky, besides the two Bishops, consisted of Fathers Badin and Nerinckx of the old missionaries, and Fathers Chabrat, Derigaud, Abell, Coomes, Ganiltz, Byrne and Elder, all of whom except Father Elder, had studied at St. Thomas' Seminary. Father Peter Schaeffer, the first ordained in the chapel of St. Thomas, was no longer in Kentucky. His health failed under the hard work of the missions, and he returned home to Belgium towards the end of the year, 1817. He lived for a few years longer but he never came back to America.

Rev. Anthony Ganiltz was a Frenchman, ordained at St. Thomas' in 1817. He was on the Kentucky missions until 1822, when he went with Bishop Fenwick to Ohio. He returned to Kentucky in 1838, and a few years later went to spend his remaining days in his native France.

If they, who accuse the Church of fostering ignorance, would honestly note the course of the Bishops in their efforts for education, they could not fail to see that the Catholic Church has everywhere been its greatest friend and most earnest promoter. Bishop Flaget was but a fair exponent of the universal policy of the Church, yet, next to his zeal for the teaching of the Gospel, we must rank his desire for the educa-



tion of his people. He brought an educational institution for priests along with him when he came to Kentucky. Among his first acts was the establishment of two orders of women to attend to the education of the young of both sexes and the higher education of the girls. He threw open St. Thomas' for poor boys, and in the basement of his Seminary at Bardstown, he opened a school for the boys of that village. So far nothing had been done in the whole State of Kentucky for the higher education of boys, although the progenitors of the present self-styled champions of education had been in possession of the ground for forty years. There was no college for young men anywhere in the West, and those in the East were too far away to benefit the youth of Kentucky.

Bishop Flaget and his priests felt this want, and to supply it, a special building was put up in 1820, and the scope of the Bardstown school so enlarged that regular boarders were received for the academic courses. This was the beginning of St. Joseph's College, and that first building is now the old south wing of the College. Father Geo. A. M. Elder was placed at the head of it, and it flourished from the day of its opening.

Another priest, Rev. Wm. Byrne, in 1821, made an effort to promote higher education for young men living farther in the interior of the State, and a one and unaided, he established and successfully operated St. Mary's College, near the church of St. Charles, where he was temporarily located. Both of the institutions became too well known to need any further mention here, only as they may affect the story of St. Thomas'.



## CHAPTER IX.

Wider Possibilities for Learning.—Narrower Prospects for St. Thomas' as a Seminary.—Some Early Students at the Colleges.—Boys' School Flourishes.—Brothers of the Mission.—Manual Training.—New Building.—Death of Father Derigaud.—Father De Rohan.—Rohan's Knob.—Priests Buried at St. Thomas'.—Peculiar Titles.—Partial Closing of St. Thomas.—Dispersion of the Brothers.—Their Prospective Work.

The establishment of the new colleges at different points, gave to the young men of Kentucky greater facilities for learning, and stimulated their desire for a better education than was possible in the ordinary schools. As a course of ancient classics was made a part of the studies, it was possible for Catholic young men, who might feel an inclination to become priests, to go to these colleges and yet follow the studies preliminary to an ecclesiastical training. Thus greater possibilities were opened for increasing the number of the clergy, but, at the same time, the prospects for St. Thomas' were lessened.

From the first, such young men were found among those who entered these institutions. It was not that they were unwilling to associate with those at St. Thomas', or to live their life of poverty and labor, but that their parents would not load the Bishop with burdens that they felt they themselves could, and should carry. At the colleges, also, they would be able to give their whole time to study and thus acquire an education along broader lines than were laid down at St. Thomas' at that time. At St. Mary's were Martin John Spalding, his brother Benedict

Joseph, and James Madison Lancaster, a family connection of the Spaldings although not a blood relation. A sister of young Lancaster was married at the time to an elder brother of the Spaldings. These Lancasters come of exceptionally good stock, for their grandmother, Elinor Bradford, was a first cousin to Abp. Carroll of Baltimore. This sister became the mother of John Lancaster Spalding, the present illustrious Bishop of Peoria, and of the late Rev. B. J. Spalding of the same city. At St. Joseph's we find John McGill, who became Bishop of Richmond, Francis Chambige and others. I would also mention among the first students of St. Joseph's, Ben. J. Webb, who, although he did not become a priest, merited the very highest place among the laity, and showed himself throughout his long life a fearless champion of the Church. A monument in bronze from the Catholics of Kentucky would be no more than a fitting and well-deserved tribute to his memory for his priceless work in the cause of religion.

As the students at St. Thomas' became ready for their higher studies they entered the Seminary at Bardstown, and their places at St. Thomas' were not filled as rapidly as they were made vacant. This resulted in a falling off in the number of the students until, in 1825, there were but fifteen, and it might seem but a question of time when St. Thomas' could no longer be profitably conducted as an ecclesiastical seminary. The school for boys was flourishing, and some of the pupils began to pay a portion of their expenses. Thirty of them are said to have paid an annual tuition of \$35, mostly in produce.

Under these circumstances Bishop Flaget thought he saw a propitious moment when he could put into effect a plan that he had conceived many years before. It would help his school on, keep St. Thomas' open as a seminary, and provide a teaching and working order of men. As early as July 4, 1813, he made this entry in his Journal: "To-day, while saying mass, a distraction,—perhaps a good thought,—came into my mind; which was, that perhaps, we could unite together several artisans of different trades, who could consecrate themselves to God by religious vows and live in community. Each might receive apprentices, and all who could work together in common without interfering with one another might do so. The rest might work in a separate place, but always in the same enclosure. There would be regular hours set apart, at which all would assemble for prayer, spiritual reading, etc."

Pious young men in sufficient numbers were not lacking to form the beginning of an Order which, Bishop Flaget hoped, would be modeled after the Christian Brothers, and of which the members, "besides aspiring to Christian perfection by the observance of the three simple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, might also aid the missionaries as catechists and teachers of elementary schools, and in the management of temporal affairs." Ten such young men were gathered together, and their institute was begun in 1826. Most of them were skilled in some trade, and under their direction a department was added to the school upon a plan similar to that now followed by our modern Manual Training Schools.

Father Derigaud was appointed Director of this new Brotherhood, the members of which bound themselves by vows for three years as a first test of their vocation.

To provide suitable and ample accommodations for the various departments of this new community an extension seventy-two feet long was added to the original building. In this they must have begun with good prospects of success, for Bishop Flaget was elated with his new foundation and made the following entry in his Journal: "I was a hundred times more happy in the midst of these good Brothers, than I could have been, seated at the table of kings. How many beautiful fancies started from my old imagination on seeing these Brothers seated at the same table with *me*, and who represented so well the Apostles, simple men like them, seated at the table with their Divine Master. I saw already in full operation a pious association of various trades; shops erected for completing a building; children sent to them from all parts to learn different trades, to acquire an ordinary education, and, above all, to be instructed in their religion, and to learn to practice its duties. I saw erected a beautiful and vast chapel, in which divine services would be performed with much gravity, majesty and fervor. I saw one wing of this monastery entirely consecrated to those men, who, tired of the world, might wish to end their days in holy and rigorous penance. In another wing I located apartments for the Bishop and such priests of his as would be happy to recollect themselves for a few days and purify their hearts. Ah, good God, what did I not see?" The vision of the good Bishop was not to be realized

in his time, but God grants to His saints a farther view into the future than to ordinary mortals, and all this may yet come to pass.

For some reason, now unknown, the Brothers left St. Thomas' in 1827, and removed to a farm in Casey county. Here they built a monastery, to which they gave the name of Mount Casino after the famous Benedictine Abbey in Italy. A short time afterwards, they met with their first great misfortune, when, on October 29, 1827, their wise and pious Director, Father Derigaud, was called from them by death. They reverently carried his remains back to his beloved St. Thomas', and there buried them in the little graveyard of the parish and Seminary. Father Derigaud was the first priest to be buried at St. Thomas'. Of him Bishop Flaget said that he had given him great satisfaction with no admixture of bitterness, and Bishop Spalding wrote: "The piety, the laborious zeal, the fortitude and the many virtues of Father Derigaud will long be remembered in Kentucky, where his memory is deservedly cherished."

The second priest to be buried at St. Thomas' was the venerable Father William De Rohan, who came to Kentucky in 1790, and in that year built on Pottin-ger's creek a log chapel, which he dedicated to the Holy Cross. This temporary hut was covered with clapboards, and was unprovided with glass in the windows, while a slab of wood roughly hewed served for an altar. Such was the first Catholic church ever built in Kentucky. Father De Rohan made his home for many years near this church at the foot of that remarkable mound which, since that time, has been known as Rohan's Knob. The last few years of his



life were spent piously at St. Thomas', where he died in the year 1832, or thereabouts. Father Joseph Rogers died at St. Thomas' in September, 1846, and was buried there also. Father Rogers was born in Nelson county and studied at St. Thomas' under Father Derigaud. These were the only priests who were interred in the old cemetery of St. Thomas.

Speaking of Father De Rohan reminds me of the peculiar title by which the property of Holy Cross was passed over to the representatives of the Church. The deed is from Basil Hayden to William Bald and others for the Roman Catholic Church, dated, May 1, 1798, and for the sum of five pounds, conveys the chapel, and two acres of ground describes as follows:—"Beginning at a hickory standing forty five degrees west, twelve and a half poles from said chapel, running thence due east eighteen poles to a white oak sapling; thence due south eighteen poles to a white oak and hickory; thence due west eighteen poles to a dogwood; thence due north eighteen poles to the beginning."

Unbusinesslike as this may seem, it was better than in the case of the first brick church, built at Danville, Ky., in 1807, where there was only a verbal promise of a deed that was never reduced to writing, and, when the owner, who gave the ground to the Church as a donation, had the misfortune to fail in business, the church, as well as all his other property, was seized by his creditors and sold. The congregation never recovered the building, and it was converted into a dwelling and became lost to the Church. The loss of this church left the church of St. Thomas as the oldest brick church in the West,—



a distinction it would now have in any case, for the little church of Danville would have given way to a better one long before the present time.

The departure of Father Derigaud and the Brothers was a severe blow to St. Thomas'. It is even said that the Seminary was closed, but it is difficult to believe this. Bishop Flaget was not a man to allow things to go to waste, and he would hardly permit the buildings to stand idle after the great efforts and expense attendant on their erection. It was about this time that Bishop Flaget reported there were two priests, five teachers and fifteen seminarians at St. Thomas', with thirty boys who paid a part of their tuition, and buildings valued at \$11,400. It is most probable that the boys' school was kept up, and the students of Latin were received and continued as teachers at St. Thomas', although other features became prominent and obscured its title as a preparatory seminary. Many of the priests, who were ordained a few years later, were studying Latin at this time, and it is known that some of them did not go to the Seminary at Bardstown until ready to take up their advanced studies. It is probable that the Brothers returned to St. Thomas' after the death of Father Derigaud and resumed work there. Their conference for an election of a Director to succeed Father Derigaud was held at Nazareth, and we hear no more of their Casey county establishment. There is a record of the Brothers being at St. Thomas' in the early thirties, conducting the school upon the plan of a college, but their organization did not survive many years. The times and circumstances were not propitious to the perpetuation of their Order, and the

Brothers dispersed;—some of them returning to the secular world, and some of them entering other Religious Orders. One of them, said Bishop Spalding in 1852, “entered the Dominican Order, and is now Provincial in America.”

Bishop Flaget’s plan for his Brotherhood was, perhaps, a little too far-reaching, and contained too many widely different objects. The combination of a teaching order, and an industrial order, and a business order, with the necessary laborers without trades, was too great an undertaking for that early date. The sources of supply were not sufficiently abundant to insure its continuance. The plan was ideal, and in accordance with the customs of the times, when the different kinds of work had not grown into exclusive specialties, and even professional men were not above turning their hand to things outside of their profession. If the idea had been realized permanently, we can see the immense good that would have been done; how the orphans would have been accustomed to labor and taught useful trades; how unruly boys would have homes that were not prisons, and how parish schools could have been multiplied in country places, where a few acres of ground would make them almost self-supporting. The old farm of St. Thomas’ was well located for the central house of such an Order, and, with a more restricted aim, such a Brotherhood might yet be possible and successful. The mind of Bishop Flaget took in every want of his people, and his great heart went out in efforts to provide for them. If abundant means had blessed him, the title of Benefactor of the West would stand above that of Patriarch of the West, which has been justly accorded to him by a grateful people.

## CHAPTER X.

The Theologians at Bardstown.—Bishop Flaget Asks for Help.—The Rev. Dr. Kenrick Comes.—Cardinal Litta's Complaint.—The Rector's Answer.—Dr. Kenrick Working in Kentucky.—Appointed Bishop.—Some of His Students.—St. Thomas' Seminary Unique in History.—Its Work.—Vocations.—Good Missionaries.—Native Clergy.—English Without the Idioms.

When the theologians left St. Thomas' for the new Seminary at Bardstown, they continued under Bishop David almost as before but with less out-door work, yet they assisted in laying out the grounds, and in planting the gardens and parks of the new institution. Bishop David superintended their studies and was their principal instructor for several years, although his other work was constantly growing heavier. In addition to his duties as Coadjutor Bishop, he was pastor of the new Cathedral and had charge of the organ and the choir. As Superior of the Sisters of Nazareth he visited them frequently, and took a special interest in everything at St. Thomas'. As pastor of the parish he had to guard the faith of his flock, and, in an oral discussion, refuted Dr. Hall, the windy Presbyterian minister at Bardstown, whose longest and loudest sermons were against the Catholic Church. To silence him, however, Bishop David wrote two pamphlets, aggregating 170 pages, on the use and veneration of images, and vindicated the Catholic Church from all charges of idolatry.

Age was creeping on Bishop David and, lest he should break down under the weight of so many labors, Bishop Flaget wrote to the Rector of the Pro-

paganda at Rome, begging that official to send him some young priest endowed with zeal, piety and learning to aid in the missions of the State, but more especially for one who could fill the chair of a professor in his Theological Seminary.

In answer to his appeal, the Rev. Francis Patrick Kenrick, although one of the youngest in the Propaganda College, and only recently ordained, was selected by the Rector for this arduous and important mission. Father Kenrick set out from Rome without delay and arrived at Bardstown on the 25th of September, 1821, where he began his career of usefulness which lasted until July 8, 1863, when he died as Archbishop of Baltimore.

He left Rome at an opportune moment, for, if his departure had been delayed but a short time, it is probable that another would have been sent in his stead. Cardinal Litta just then received the appointment as Prefect of the Propaganda. In his own life he was a model of the virtues that should accompany the high calling of the priest, and justly did he judge that, above all other priests, the missionary needed strength of character and solid virtue. His work is the most laborious, his position the most trying, and he has less outside help than any other to cheer and encourage him, and assist him to keep up the sustaining force of practical faith. Dr. Kenrick was a strong character, but he was young, and, in the eyes of the Cardinal, his virtue did not compensate for his lack of years. The Prefect declared that it was a mistake to send young Kenrick to a mission that required ripe experience and tried endurance. If he had been Prefect at the time, he would never have consented that

one so young should be selected for such difficult work as would be found in Kentucky. The Rector of the College, who knew Dr. Kenrick, endeavored to show the Cardinal the wisdom of the choice and spoke most highly of the merits of Dr. Kenrick. But in vain; the Cardinal would not listen, and the Rector astonished the Cardinal and ended the discussion by saying: "Well, then, your Eminence, it was the Providence of God that prevented your earlier appointment, for you would have deprived America of an apostle."

Dr. Kenrick's work at the Seminary is well known, and he did not long lack in experience, for he traveled over the State in lecturing and preaching, and doing the hardest of missionary work. He took a special interest also in old St. Thomas', for it was as yet the principal feeder of the Bardstown Seminary where he was a teacher, and its past work was too important not to attract his admiration.

Dr. Kenrick was remarkably successful as a professor, but equally so as a preacher. He exhibited marked ability in preaching the Jubilee of 1826-7, when, with Bishop Flaget, he visited every mission in the diocese, stirring up the piety of the Catholics and refuting the false accusations of the sectarian preachers. The results of these labors were 50 converts, 1216 confirmations and about 6000 communions.

Bishop Flaget was so well pleased with Dr. Kenrick that he desired to resign the diocese into his hands, but the Holy See had different plans for Father Kenrick, and in 1830, appointed him Coadjutor Bishop of Philadelphia. He was consecrated in the Cathedral in Bardstown on June 6, of that year by Bishop Flaget, in the presence of Bishops Conwell,



David, England and Fenwick, but the sad consolation of conferring the episcopal dignity on his dear friend did not soften the pain he felt at losing him forever.

During the time that Dr. Kenrick was a professor at St. Joseph's, he had under him such men as Martin John and Benedict Joseph Spalding, James M. Lancaster, Edward Clark, Charles I. Coomes, Charles J. Cissel, Joseph Rogers, John C. Wathen, James Elliott, Daniel Kelly, Edward McMahon, Walter S. Coomes, Joseph Hazeltine, Francis Chambige, Elisha J. Durbin, Joseph Ferneding and others, most of whom he prepared for the priesthood and introduced into the sanctuary. Nearly all of these had been students at St. Thomas'. With such masters in divine science as Kenrick and David they should almost necessarily be learned and pious.

Some few of the select students of Kentucky were sent to Baltimore, such as George M. Elder, Ignatius Reynolds and John McGill; some to Rome, as Martin John and Benedict Spalding, and Jas. M. Lancaster. On account of their superior advantages, these became prominent in the diocese, and some of them in later life rose to eminent positions in the Church.

In the entire history of the Church, there is not a single institution whose record parallels that of old St. Thomas' Seminary. The early Christians lived in common, and from this common family, no doubt, came many of the co-laborers and successors of the Apostles, but they had treasures to turn into the common fund, and it is not said that they were forced to labor for the necessities of life. In the early monasteries the rule of study and labor obtained, but the clerics were generally exempted from its severest exac-



tions, and their labor was a discipline rather than a necessity. No modern seminary was ever established under similar conditions, yet none ever did better work.

In 1820 Bishop Flaget wrote, "Our Seminary has already given us seven priests. At present there are twelve students in the higher Seminary, and twenty-five in the preparatory courses." Forty-four candidates for the priesthood in less than ten years was not a bad showing for Kentucky. With few exceptions, every priest ordained before 1830, was, in whole or in part, educated at St. Thomas'. In 1811, Bishop Flaget found three missionary priests in the whole of Kentucky; twenty years later, there was not a mission able to support a priest, which did not have a resident pastor. The ten churches had increased and multiplied; schools and academies were growing up on all sides, and two colleges were supplying the needs of higher education. To what must we attribute all this? Surely, to the zeal of the clergy, and to the providential institution that begot them—to St. Thomas' Seminary. Only a few years before, the people were stretching out their hands to the Bishop of Baltimore, asking him to send them some one to break to them the Bread of Life; now it was offered in abundance to the very least child, and Catholics were being attracted to Kentucky, because they would find better opportunities there than in other localities for the practice of their religion.

In 1817, Father Nerinckx was in Europe in the interests of the Diocese of Bardstown, and he wrote, "The American youth is too little prepared to think of a religious vocation, and the Seminary too devoid

of means of support to be useful to the desired extent ; besides, our Catholics are too few in number and too poor to supply the necessary means."

When Father Nerinckx wrote this he was asking assistance from his countrymen in Belgium for the missions of Kentucky, and it was natural that he would wish to make his appeal as strong as possible. His own experience in Kentucky was of a nature to justify all of his statements then, and some of them for a long time afterwards. His knowledge, however, could not relate to facts later than in 1815, when he started for Europe, and about this time the American youth must have begun to think very rapidly of a religious vocation, for upon his return there were fifteen in the Seminary and "the number might have been doubled if the means of the Bishop had allowed him to receive all who applied for admission." That lack of means alone prevented the doubling of the number of students speaks well for the religious vocations of the American youth of that day, and that these vocations were of a high and heroic character, no one, at all familiar with the history of the men and the times, can have any doubt. We of to-day know practically very little of real missionary life as it existed throughout Kentucky in the early times, but we do know that all of the priests were then missionaries, and the results of their work are still strong visible evidences to prove that they were good missionaries. With such eminent authority as Cardinal Litta on the requirements of a good missionary, the work of Father David stands out brilliantly in the lives and labors of Kentucky's missionary clergy. No further argument is necessary to convince us that this first period in the life of St.

Thomas' Seminary was inexpressibly rich, both in the quantity and quality of the fruit that it bore to the Church of God. Good old St. Thomas'! Good old Father David! If both of you could have lived on, and worked on indefinitely, the Church of Kentucky could have sent her missionaries to do for the entire West what they did for their own Kentucky Home.

St. Thomas' opened necessarily with students from abroad, but, once in operation, it developed a native clergy and took the apparent force from the Know-Nothing accusation of a "Foreign Church," so generally, and often with effect, used to frighten timid Americans. The few foreigners among the priests but accentuated the character of the body of the clergy as native, and the Church as universal. Nor did their ignorance of idiomatic English seriously interfere with their efficiency in the ministry, although it would sometimes provoke a smile. It did not matter if one of them could say, in announcing his appointments—"To-morrow, I will say mass at Richard Coomes'; on Tuesday, at Dickey Clark's; on Wednesday, at Molly Drury's; on Thursday, I will be in Clear Creek, and on Friday, I will be *nowhere*." Neither did the self-sacrificing missionary lose any of the high esteem in which he was held if, after a tour among his poor people, he could take from his saddlebags a piece of jeans, the gift of some good soul, and say: "Sister, here be some *jane*,—and here be some thread to sew her with."

## CHAPTER XI.

Less interest in St. Thomas'.—Defection of Father Charles Coomes.—St. Thomas' as a College.—Again a Seminary.—Its Possible Closing —Peter J. Lavalie.—Death of Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds.—Death of Bishop David.—Teachers at St. Joseph's.—Classics at the Colleges.—Vocations Growing Scarce.—Priests of the Period.—Series of Vocations in Families.—Eloquence of the Clergy.—Quartet of Kentucky's Distinguished Sons.

The departure of Bishop Kenrick from Bardstown was a distinct loss for the Church of Kentucky. His going was particularly felt by the Seminaries, for there was no one who could take his place and carry on the work with the same energy and effectiveness. Bishop Flaget could give but little time to them, and the weight of years was telling upon Bishop David. His duties as Coadjutor Bishop required all his waning strength, and the affairs of both Seminaries had to be placed in other, and less experienced hands. Father Drigaud, the immediate successor of Father David at St. Thomas', was dead. His assistant, Father Charles Coomes, was taken from St. Thomas' and assigned to the missions, where he failed to persevere, but his fall brought into clearer light the staunch faith and strong virtue of the faithful missionaries around him. To his credit, however, it must be said that he never opposed his former brethren of the clergy. He lived a life that the world would call honest, and died many years later, presumably, repentant. He and Father Abell were ordained, side by side, in 1818, and for six years they labored in the same field. "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other shall

be left. Watch ye, therefore." This Father Coomes must not be confounded with the venerable Father Charles I. Coomes, who died in 1878, after forty years of zealous labor on the most difficult missions of Kentucky.

The Brothers, with the Rev. Linus O. Coomes at their head, continued to hold St. Thomas' open as a seminary as well as a college, and Rev. Walter S. Coomes was associated with his brother, Father Linus, in the work. During several years, the collegiate department showed a steady growth, and assumed such importance that, in 1833, the following prospectus was issued. It shows the changed destiny of old St. Thomas'.

#### ST. THOMAS' COLLEGE, BARDSTOWN, KY.

This House of Education, the first that was established by the Right Rev. Bishop of Bardstown, in the year 1811, is situated about four miles south of Bardstown, half a mile from the Nashville Road, in a pleasant and healthy situation, and provided with extensive and commodious buildings.

The conductors of the Institution profess the Catholic religion. However, students of every denomination are admitted upon the sole condition of conforming to the general rules of the house.

This College, being considered as an appendage to St. Joseph's College in Bardstown, is conducted on similar principles. It is under the superintendence of the Right Rev. Bishop and his Coadjutor, who will occasionally examine the pupils, and encourage their progress in the various branches of literature. The diet is plain but wholesome and abundant. The sick, if left in the house, are attended with the greatest punctuality and tender care, without any expense to the parents except for medicine and the physician's attendance.

In this College are taught, Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, English Grammar, Geography, with the use of Maps and Globes; Book-keeping, Surveying, and the most essential branches of Mathematics. The Latin, Greek and French Languages.



## TERMS :

Board, including washing and mending, with the tuition of the three branches first specified .....	\$72 Specie.
Tuition of the other branches .....	16

None are received as boarders unless they pay their first quarter in advance, and a want of punctuality in paying the other quarter in advance will create the painful necessity of sending back the pupils to their parents or guardians ; experience having proved that a contrary practice is ruinous to the Institution.

The boarders will find themselves in bed and bedding, hand towels, a silver or tin goblet, decent clothing, books and stationery. A charge of \$4 for bed and bedding, and \$3 for stationery per annum, will be made when furnished by the Institution.

No pupil will be admitted for a shorter term than a quarter. No deduction will be made for the time of absence, unless occasioned by sickness, nor for the time of vacation.

Parents or guardians, who live at a considerable distance, are requested to have a correspondent in Bardstown or Louisville, to whom application may be made for the usual remittances.

All communications respecting the Institution, addressed (free of postage) to St. Thomas' College, near Bardstown, will be punctually attended to.

In the same year also, there is a notice of "The Seminary of the Brothers of the Mission", with Father Linus Coomes in charge, and Father Walter Coomes as his assistant. Thus old St. Thomas' became, for the time, an ordinary secular college, with the ecclesiastical department relegated into the background.

As a college, St. Thomas' did not continue long. The dissolution of the Brotherhood followed, and in 1836, the Rev. James M. Lancaster, who had just returned from Rome, and Rev. Edward Clark were sent to St. Thomas', which was made again exclusively a preparatory seminary. In 1838, there were twenty



students, and a reorganization of the teaching faculty took place with Rev. Walter S. Coomes as president, and Fathers Napoleon J. Perche, John Quinn and Charles Blanc as professors.

This arrangement lasted but for one year, when the seminarians were transferred to St. Mary's in Marion county. Both Father Coomes and Father Quinn were sent to assist Father McGill at the Church of St. Louis in Louisville. Father Blanc was given charge of St. Boniface's Church in Louisville, and Father Perche was authorized to organize the Church of Our Lady at Portland, now a part of Louisville. Father Perche remained about two years at Portland, when he went to Louisiana, where he labored so satisfactorily that in 1870, he was raised to the dignity of Archbishop of New Orleans and ruled that See with honor for thirteen years.

The next few years do not show that much clerical work was done at St. Thomas'. The Seminary was not absolutely closed, for it is said that Peter J. Lavialle, afterwards Bishop of Louisville, was there from 1841, until his ordination in 1844. Father Aud did pastoral duty at St. Thomas' during this time, as also did Father Bruyere, who was somewhat noted as an educator. He probably had other students under him besides Mr. Lavialle. It is also pretty certain that a number of poor boys were housed and educated there during these years, but no one now living has any distinct recollection of this, and there are no positive records to confirm the vague tradition.

In August, 1840, an event, touching in its sadness, took place at St. Thomas'. The parents of the Very Rev. Dr. Reynolds, Bishop Flaget's Vicar-Gen-

eral, and later Bishop of Charleston, were at this time living in a portion of the Seminary building. Mrs. Reynolds was, suddenly and without premonition, stricken with death, and the blow so prostrated her aged husband that, two weeks later, he died and was laid beside her in the graveyard of St. Thomas.

In 1841, another event saddened St. Thomas', and the whole Diocese of Bardstown. This was the death, at Nazareth, of the saintly Bishop David, the founder of the Seminary and the father and model of the priests. Bishop Flaget was at Bardstown at the time, and, on July 12, wrote to a member of his family in France a letter in which he said: "God wishes me to prepare for death, for He takes away from me persons who have been attached to me for more than sixty years; the good Father Bonnet, then my brother, and now my old Coadjutor, who is at this moment struggling with death, and who, in three or four days, will be no longer of this world." Bishop Flaget was not aware that the end had come for his old friend a few hours before.

This uncertain and precarious period for St. Thomas' lasted until 1848, when the Jesuits took charge of St. Joseph's College at Bardstown. Up to that time the Ecclesiastical Seminary had been conducted in connection with the College, but this year it was officially transferred to St. Mary's. St. Joseph's, as a college, had grown and prospered under such prominent directors and teachers as Fathers George M. Elder, Ignatius A. Reynolds, Martin J. Spalding, James M. Lancaster, Francis Chambige, John B. Hutchins, Edward McMahon and John Bruyere.

At St. Mary's College there were a few ecclesiastical students at times, but more especially while that institution was in the hands of the Jesuits up to 1846, when they left Kentucky to found their greater institution at Fordham, N. Y. Upon the transfer of the seminarians from Bardstown to St. Mary's, that institution was given in charge to the diocesan clergy, and Rev. P. J. Lavialle was appointed superior, with Rev. Wm. E. Clark as his assistant. The students of theology numbered about five, and it is not known how many were in the classical or commercial courses. Upon the whole, the arrangements for ecclesiastical studies for a number of years past were not satisfactory. The establishment of classical courses at the colleges gave to the aspirants to the priesthood a choice of location, but this division of the resources of the diocese prevented any marked success for any one of them. For some reason also, new vocations did not seem to be sought out, and encouraged and directed as formerly, when there was but one center, and Father David and St. Thomas' were that center.

In the early days it was easy for a young man of the right sort to make a test of his vocation, and his poverty was not a bar to his aspirations. Now, with pay schools, the poor boy was at a disadvantage, especially when the colleges began to receive in considerable numbers the sons of wealthy southern planters. With his Kentucky pride he did not care to court the risk of humiliations, and he held back when he would have not have hesitated if anything like the old-time condition had been preserved. The result of this was, that Kentucky was no longer supplying priests in sufficient numbers to meet the demands of

the growing missions, and, at the same time, to fill the places of those who had fought the good fight and gone to receive their crown. Those remaining of the early priests were growing old and less able for the strenuous life of a missionary, and new subjects were being ordained only at the rate of about one a year. Something must be done, or the splendid work, inaugurated and carried on by the rapidly passing generation of the clergy, would come to a standstill. Bishop Spalding realized this, and one of his first acts after his consecration was to arrange for the re-opening of old St. Thomas' Seminary.

Bishop Spalding knew that he could not depend on the colleges for his priests, for he had observed their influence on young men and could write of it this rather remarkable passage: "For twenty-eight years the secular clergy had charge of St. Joseph's College, and during a great part of that time, the theological seminary was placed near the college, the seminarians teaching, or performing duties therein, a few hours per day. The Bishops, for many years, lived in the Seminary, and ate at the same table with the young candidates for the ministry. This connection of the two institutions had its advantages, as well as its inconveniences. Experience, however, showed that many of the seminarians had their vocations shaken by being thrown so much in contact with the youth of the world; while scarcely a candidate for the ministry was obtained among those who received their education at the college."

Most of the priests ordained during this period had the advantage of a training under Bishop David, and they did not differ much from the earlier ones.

The old spirit of sacrifice and singleness of purpose persevered, and it was necessary, for the same conditions of hardship and constant work confronted the priest on every mission of the State. Their names fit naturally and gracefully beside those of their predecessors. This will be seen when we recall such names as the Spaldings, Lancaster, McGill, Lavialle, Chambigé, Degauquier, Hazeltine, Hutchins, Aud, Powell, Coomes, Elliott, and the rest almost to a man.

It is interesting, also, to note how the Spirit of the Lord worked in another way among the Catholics of Kentucky and seemed to rest on certain families of the pioneers and continue in their generation, so that many of the younger clergy claimed kinship with their older brethren in the ministry. The Abell, the Spalding, the Elder, the Montgomery, and the Hill families were examples of this, but a notable instance is that of the venerable Francis Coomes, one of the early Cox's Creek settlers. Father Charles I. Coomes was his grandson; so also were Fathers Wathen and Aud. The race is not dead yet, for Archbishop Montgomery of San Francisco, and the Fathers Edwin Drury, Celestine Brey, Lucien Clements and Louis H. Spalding, all of the diocese of Louisville, claim him as their direct ancestor. The same spirit persevered among their female descendants, but the record is not so patent, as they buried their identity when they put off their family name and asked the world to recognize them only by the name of Sister.

Before leaving this portion of the history of old St. Thomas', and saying good-bye to the warriors of the first great battle for the church of Kentucky, I would fain say a few words on their powers as preachers of the Word of God.



When thinking of the pioneer priests of Kentucky, we are apt to lay too much stress on their simplicity, and regard them as plain men, removed from the ranks of the common people principally by their Sacred Orders, by their better knowledge of religious truths, and by their zealous labors in wild and unorganized districts. If we look among them for culture, eloquence and learning, our minds turn to Bishop Spalding, as the one conspicuous representative of these attainments, among all of the early clergy of Kentucky. The Hon. Ben J. Webb, who, for more than seventy years, had the most exceptional opportunities of observing the priests of Kentucky, from the first one ordained down to those of the present time, is somewhat broader than we are in considering this subject. His greater knowledge makes him the better judge, and he, while giving full credit to the body of the clergy, singles out by name four, as deserving of the highest praise. These are: the Rev. Robert A. Abell and the Rev. Ignatius A. Reynolds, both representing St. Thomas' Seminary, the Rev. Martin John Spalding, a graduate of St. Mary's College, and the Rev. John McGill, an alumnus of St. Joseph's College. Of these he says: "Father Abell was magnetic, rich in fancy and wit, his mind filled with poetic images, with grand thoughts, with apt illustrations. Of magnanimous heart and gigantic intellect, a student of nature and a profound thinker, he was fitted for any emergency, and swayed men's minds as does the gentle wind the bladed grass. Dr. Reynolds, as early as 1824, had acquired a reputation for eloquence that was only second in the entire diocese, to that of Father Abell, who was ten years his senior. Ten years later, another eloquent Ken-



tuckian took his place in the ranks of the clergy of the State, in the person of Rev. Martin J. Spalding, who became in time still more widely known for his ability as a speaker, and still another came in the person of John McGill, a young cleric of extraordinary mental gifts and acquirements, who soon proved himself the equal of the others in his ability to attract popular attention. The history of local churches in the United States has scarcely furnished a more extraordinary array of native talent than is presented in the names of these cotemporary Kentucky priests. They attached to men who, in their day and generation, ranked deservedly with the most noted ecclesiastics of the country. Intellectually, they were all highly endowed, and to all of them had been given grace to use their gifts for the glory of God and the exaltation of His Holy Church." These four formed a famous advance line for the Church of Kentucky, behind whom the rest of the clergy closed up in serried ranks; an honor to St. Mary's, an honor to St. Joseph's, a double honor to St. Thomas'. Their worth was seen and appreciated, and it was the reason why, friends as they were during life, they were destined to be separated in death. The gentle Reynolds went first, and they laid him to rest beside the murmuring sea in his adopted Southland; the fiery McGill struggled on, preaching the peace of God amidst the warring elements of humanity, and dead, they laid him in peace among those he loved as his children, and who loved him as a father, in the once Capital of the lost Confederacy. Spalding, the light upon the mountain top, followed him only a few weeks later, and sleeps beside the Father of the American Church in beauti-

ful Baltimore, while Abell, the intrepid, the first and last of the four, lingered yet a while, a link to hold the glory of the past a little longer before us, and alone rests in his native soil among those for whom he lived and labored for three score years. Their spirits rest united in the bosom of God.

## CHAPTER XII.

Reasons for the Decline of St. Thomas'.—Debt.—Loss of Dr. Kenrick.—Absence of Bishop Flaget.—Lack of Harmony.—Affliction of Bishop Chabrat.—Plans of Bishop Spalding.—Father Hutchins in Charge.—Debt Cleared Off.—Father Lavalie.—Appointment of Father Chambige.—Noble Band of Priests from Europe.—Last Call for Outside Help.—Pastors of St. Thomas' Church.

The decline of old St. Thomas' was to be expected after the removal of the theologians, but its almost complete failure was the effect of a long series of causes. The cost of the buildings was considerable, and the later improvements had been made with borrowed money. The failure of the Brothers as a permanent body took away from Bishop Flaget all hope of assistance from that quarter, and left the burden of the entire debt upon his unaided shoulders. The small number of students did not admit of any extensive teaching faculty, and anything beyond the simplest management would but increase the debt.

Worried by these and other things, Bishop Flaget was trying to resign from the charge of the diocese. He was old, and his Coadjutor, Bishop David, was still older. If Dr. Kenrick would be appointed Bishop of Bardstown, as Bishop Flaget fondly hoped, then things would right themselves under his firm and aggressive management. But that hope was doomed when it became known that Dr. Kenrick's appointment was for Philadelphia. Not only was Bardstown to lose him as a Bishop, but the Seminary was to lose him as a director.

The long-looked-for relief seemed to have come when Father Chabrat was made his Coadjutor, and Bishop Flaget turned over the administration of the diocese into younger hands and went to Europe with the hope of spending the rest of his life there in peace. In this he was disappointed, as the Holy Father, while granting him permission to remain in Europe for an indefinite time, refused to allow him to resign the care of the Church of Kentucky. This left Bishop Chabrat in a position of only relative authority, yet, during the four years of Bishop Flaget's absence, he attempted something towards the reviving of St. Thomas' as a seminary. Just then lines of disagreement began to show between Bishop Chabrat and the clergy, and lack of harmony produced its inevitable results. The prudence of a number of the prominent and influential priests prevented any disorder in the affairs of the diocese, but the Seminary suffered for want of an earnest and whole-hearted union in its support. Shortly after Bishop Flaget's return to Bardstown the See was removed to Louisville, far from the immediate vicinity of the Seminary, and new cares grew out of the removal. At this time, also, Bishop Chabrat's eyesight began to fail him, and he eventually became incapacitated for work and resigned his office. Then the Jesuits came and took charge of St. Joseph's at Bardstown, and this was an end to that institution as a theological seminary. Altogether the outlook for the Seminary was not very bright when Bishop Spalding was consecrated, on Sept. 10, 1848, and took up the administration of the affairs of the diocese.

Bishop Spalding was not a stranger to the conditions, and, being a man of affairs, in the full vigor of

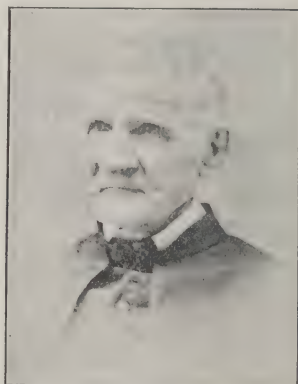




REV. JNO. B. HUTCHINS.



REV. JOS. ELDER.



REV. E. J. DURBIN.



life, wonderfully endowed, and possessing the confidence and affection of every priest in the diocese, his appointment was hailed with universal satisfaction. He felt the necessity for a seminary, and he was not long in forming his plans for a rehabilitation of the old institution that had been the prolific nursery of the early clergy.

First, the financial stress should be relieved and the Seminary placed in easier circumstances. Then, an annual collection should be made in all the churches, and a diocesan fund thus created for the support of the Seminary. This would give more stability and permanency to St. Thomas' as an ecclesiastical institution directly connected with the diocese. It would also give the clergy an active interest in it, and make even the laity, in a sense, patrons of it. The old order of manual labor and study should go, and a fixed sum should be charged, sufficient to cover the cost of simple living. The improved condition of the people would permit this, while the diocesan fund would assist worthy young men who had no patrimony.

As a first step in these plans, Bishop Spalding appointed the Rev. John B. Hutchins to take charge of the entire establishment at St. Thomas', including farm, school, and what there may have been of a Seminary.

Father Hutchins had already shown his fitness for this position. Shortly after his ordination in 1838, in conjunction with the Rev. Wm. E. Powell, he had established the flourishing school of Mount Merino in Breckenridge county. After the death of Father Powell in 1840, he had as his co-laborer, the Rev. Ben. J. Spalding, the brother of him who now placed him

where his special talent could be employed with profit. Although successful in his first work, the range of his experience was wider than Mount Merino. When St. Joseph's College was in financial straits, in 1844, Father Hutchins was entrusted with the task of extricating it from its difficulties, and he soon succeeded in freeing it from its most pressing embarrassments.

His success at St. Thomas' is best told by himself. "The debts of the institution had become quite formidable, and I was told to go to work and try to pay them off. How I did it, the Lord knows, but two years later I had every obligation of the institution paid off, and the cancelled notes laid away in my desk. In addition to these evidences of former debt, I had a small sum of money and a few notes in favor of the institution in the same receptacle. One day I got a note from the Bishop, who was then at Nazareth, directing me to come to him prepared to make an exhibit of the condition of the institution. I lost no time in doing so, and his first question was to ask for my books. My reply, that I had no books, seemed to astonish and displease him, but his displeasure passed away when I told him that, as fast as money came into my hands, I had used it to pay off the debts, and when they were all liquidated I had saved the surplus, which, then and there, I placed in his hands. When he was made to understand that the Seminary was out of debt and had money on hand, he was the most surprised man I ever saw. One thing is certain, he never afterwards complained to me that I was loose in my book-keeping."

From this it would appear that Father Hutchins practiced the idea that the best system of book-keeping was to keep no books. The system is followed to

a considerable extent still among the clergy, but, unfortunately, we are not all Hutchinses, and the end generally shows the opposite of a surplus. Bishop Spalding must have had great confidence in Father Hutchins, notwithstanding his manner of keeping accounts, for he afterwards sent him to lighten the burden of debt on St. Mary's College, which he did in 1851, and again in 1856, when he succeeded in putting that institution upon a sound financial basis.

Father Hutchins was not a specially learned man, and was more at home in the material management of an institution than among its books, yet he was not deficient in education, and was very successful as a teacher at Mount Merino and at St. Joseph's. He was an earnest and hard worker, and what he did was done with all his strength. He had a horror of debt, and practiced every economy in order to keep out of it. In after years when he visited the Seminary, he would lament that so much ground was devoted by Father Chambige to the culture of flowers, and remark how much more profitable it would be if planted with potatoes and cabbages.

Financially, the administration of Father Hutchins was a success, and as a preparation for the new era of St. Thomas', it was not a failure. It made possible the bringing together of all the ecclesiastical students under one roof, and converted into a blessing the apparent misfortune of the closing of St. Joseph's to students of theology. The division of the students for the past thirty years had been a benefit to the colleges where they were called upon to teach, but it was well-nigh fatal to the recruitment of the diocesan clergy. The way was now opened for new students in the prepara-

tory courses, and under the lead of Bishop Spalding, the priests again became earnest in seeking for vocations among the young men of their congregations. St. Thomas' was thus brought prominently forward as the one place in the diocese for special clerical training.

The new arrangements, however, left it possible for a few worthy young men, who preferred a certain independence in their poverty, to labor in the fields in payment of their education, and, it is my impression, that opportunities of this kind were offered and accepted, up to the time of the final closing of St. Thomas'.

There is some uncertainty in regard to the presence of any seminarians at St. Thomas' during the time when Father Hutchins had charge of it. A rumor places Father Lavialle there with a few students, but I consider more reliable the account, as given in the foregoing chapter, that Father Lavialle was at St. Mary's at the head of the theological school. Father Hutchins probably had some students under him, and Father Daniel Kelly assisted them in their studies and in teaching a number of orphan boys who were just then being gathered at St. Thomas'.

Father Lavialle was a relative of Bishop Chabrat, and had come to Kentucky at his invitation in 1841. The intervening years between his ordination at St. Thomas' and his appointment as professor, were spent in Louisville as assistant at the Cathedral. The rest of his life, until he was made Bishop of Louisville, was spent in teaching at St. Thomas', and as president of St. Mary's College.

Although the good work of Father Hutchins made the plans of Bishop Spalding easier of application, their inauguration was not the work of a day, and years would pass before any considerable fruits could be gathered from them. They might even fail altogether, unless the right kind of men were found to whom they could be entrusted. The good judgment of Bishop Spalding showed itself here when he appointed the Rev. Francis Chambige as superior at St. Thomas', and gave him the Rev. Peter J. Lavialle as his assistant. This was not a large teaching faculty, but it was larger than St. Thomas' had at its beginning, and this might be called its second beginning. At first, the students were few in number and many teachers were not necessary. The theologians assisted with the lower classes, as was the case with the older students in early times, and in this way they managed for several years, forming new classes for the fresh arrivals and giving instruction to the orphans.

Having arranged things so happily for the Seminary, Bishop Spalding turned his attention to other pressing wants of his diocese. He was in need of priests, and to supply this need he went to Europe to make a personal appeal to the missionary spirit that never failed to respond to similar calls. Taking with him Father Deparcq, he first visited France, and there received and accepted the offer of two deacons,—the Rev. Michael Bouchet and the Rev. Martin Chazal. Going thence to Belgium, they, for some reason, got no help from there at that time, but Holland came to the fore with the priests, Rev. John H. Bekkers, Rev. John Van Luytelaar, Rev. Francis Wuyts, and Rev. Lawrence Bax; the deacons, Rev. Francis X. Van



Deutekom and Rev. Nicholas W. Van Emstede, and the subdeacon, Rev. Joseph De Vries. Fathers Van Luytelaar and Van Emstede later joined the Redemptorist Order, and of the others it is not necessary to speak further than to say that their works will be their eulogy for a long time. They deserved an abundant reward, which they have all gone to receive, except the venerable Father Bax, who is still the loved pastor of St John's church in Louisville, which he took charge of fifty years ago.

This was the last special call for outside help for the diocese of Louisville as long as St. Thomas' existed as a Seminary.

The Church of St. Thomas' was generally served by priests connected with the Seminary, and a list of these early pastors would show them in the following order arranged from the early accounts, from the Catholic Directory and from the baptismal records of the Church.

Rev. John B. David, ....	1811 to 1819.
" James Derigaud, .....	1819 to 1826.
" Edward McMahon, .....	1826 to 1829.
" Daniel Kelly, .....	1829 to 1830.
" Linus O. Coomes, .....	1830 to 1831.
" Walter S. Coomes, .....	1831 to 1835.
" Edward Clark, .....	1835 to 1836.
" A. A. Aud, ....	1836 to 1842.
" John Bruyere, .....	1842 to 1844.
" P. Chandy, .....	1844 to 1846.
" Daniel Kelly, .....	1846 to 1849.
" John B. Hutchins .....	1849 to 1850.

During short vacancies Fathers Cissel, Evremond, Abell and Rogers officiated, and even Bishop Flaget acted as pastor and baptized as late as 1831. Father Chambige became pastor, March 25, 1850, and the



successive pastors were Fathers Lavialle, Chazal, O'Driscoll, Reed, Martin, Russell and Creary. These filled the position until the removal of the Seminary, after which Father Lacoste served for a time, when the Rev. Nicholas Ryan received the appointment, which he has held to the present time.

## CHAPTER XIII.

French Missionaries.—Incident in the Life of Bishop Flaget.—Sketch of Father Chambige.—St. Thomas' Opened.—Domestic Arrangements.—Its First Years.—Growing Prosperity.—Increase in Students and Faculty.—Students from Other Dioceses.—Prospectus of 1854.—New Building.—The Early Students.—The Survivors.—E. M. Bachmann, First Preparatorian.

France has been as a Fairy Godmother to the Church of America. During the years of our greatest need, when we were unable to help ourselves, she sent us of her best and most devoted priests to do our missionary work when priests must live like the savage, or his immediate successor—the pioneer. Those men were not self-seekers, and the few of them to whom dignities came, accepted the honor almost invariably under protest. As a rule they were happy to remain in humble positions, and to work for God in obscurity. When, more than a century ago, our civilization began its painful march westward, the French missionary was in the van helping to blaze the trails. Steadily he went through forests and over prairies, crossing rivers and mountains, until he met a slowly advancing tide of semi-civilization on the plains of New Mexico and Arizona.

In sending forth its messengers of salvation, no locality in France has outdone the rugged hills of Auvergne, whose hardy sons were ever ready to go to the rescue of the perishing, as St. Patrick went to Ireland when "he thought he saw all the children of that country, from the wombs of their mothers, stretch-

ing out their hands and piteously crying to him for help." Until a short time ago, an entire ecclesiastical province in America was known in France as "Little Auvergne," for its metropolitan, all its suffragan bishops, and three-fourths of its priests were natives of Auvergne. The exodus of priests from that particular part of France was so great that the Bishop became alarmed lest his own diocese should come to want.

I remember calling, in 1877, upon Mgr. Feron, the Bishop of Clermont in Auvergne, who had governed the diocese for over forty years as a successor of Mgr. De Bonald, the Bishop who had conferred subdeaconship upon Bishop Flaget. The venerable prelate was quite disturbed by my visit, and began to protest that he could spare no more priests for the mission, and he was reassured only when I told him that my call was not for the purpose of inducing any of his priests to leave him, but simply that I might pay him my respects and kiss the hands that had conferred the Sacred Order of the Priesthood upon my own Bishop.

It will not be out of place here to record an incident in the life of Bishop Flaget, which has never been published. It is related in a letter of the Rev. J. P. Machebeuf to his father, dated "On Board the Ship Sylvie De Grasse, August 8, 1839." After speaking of the party, which consisted of Bishops Flaget and Purcell, Rev. John McGill and five missionary priests from Auvergne, among whom were himself and Rev. John B. Lamy, the future Archbishop of Santa Fe, he goes on to tell of those who were seasick, and adds: "As for Bishop Flaget, it is really wonderful. He has not experienced the slightest indisposition, or at least,

it has been impossible for us to detect any signs of it. He is always cheerful, always amiable. Every morning he is the first to get up and go to perform his devotions in the little saloon on deck. I cannot tell you how often he prays, for it seems that he spends the whole day in prayer or pious reading. How do you suppose that we could have any severe storm with such a holy man on board? He was the very last one to whom we should expect anything to happen, yet the good God did permit a little accident to befall him, no doubt to give us the occasion to admire his patience and mortification. The second Sunday of our voyage he was walking upon deck, when suddenly a heavy beam of timber rolled upon him, crushing and bruising his limb, and causing him great pain. Nevertheless, he did not lose his accustomed cheerfulness, and when asked how he felt he would answer good-naturedly, that he could not complain when he thought of all that God had suffered for him. The accident has not been followed by any very serious consequences, thanks to the good care of the ship's doctor."

Auvergne was the home of Francis Chambige. He was born at Billom in that province, November 11, 1807. He was a relative of the saintly Bishop Flaget, but his modesty was such that few ever heard him refer to the relationship. His father was a chemist of some note, and had his own practical and experimental laboratory. Here it was that the young Francis learned the elements and practice of chemistry and its kindred sciences—botany, geology, and mineralogy—in which he was in after life recognized as an authority. The perusal of some of the letters of Bishop Flaget interested him, and finally roused him to the desire of going



*A. Schaubig*





to America to labor as a priest in the missions that Bishop Flaget described. He had simply caught the missionary spirit, ever intense in Auvergne, where the desire for the glory of God was a natural legacy to every inhabitant, since twenty-six of its Bishops in the See of Clermont are ranked among the Saints.

Upon arriving at Bardstown, a young man of about twenty years, he entered the Seminary of St. Joseph's, then under the care of Bishop David and Dr. Kenrick. He was not long at the Seminary before his special talent was recognized and he was made teacher of a class in the sciences in the College. His ordination took place in 1834, after which he was officially attached to the College as professor and accountant, and at the same time he assisted in the work of the parish.

But the missionary spirit was not to be suppressed, and he asked for the active work of the ministry. He was assigned to the arduous mission of Grayson and Hardin counties, with stations at Rude's and Cliffeys creeks, Bethlehem, Elizabethtown, St. Clare's, St. Patrick's, St. John the Baptist's, and several other places. For five years in that vineyard he bore "the burden of the day, and the burning heat," and laid up a stock of practical experience that was of priceless value to him when he came to prepare others for the same kind of labor. The mission was not an inviting one. The Rev. Charles Cissel had laid down his life there after four years of toil and privation; the Rev. Edward Clark was there scarcely more than a year when he was obliged to give it up, yet Father Cham-bige bore up for five years under the work for a scattered people, who gave him their love for his labor, for they had little else to give. His monetary compensation for his five years of service was *eight dollars a year!*

Father Chambige had some means of his own coming from his family, that he could make use of for his personal wants, and he used them, not alone for himself, but for many of the wants of his mission. The poor people of the missions were willing to help with the products of their farms and their looms, and they would give their work in building and supporting the churches, but, with the best of good will, they could supply but few comforts to their pastors.

The experience of Father Chambige was not exceptional with the missionaries of that time. Bishop Flaget never told the poor people that he would send them a priest when they were able to support one in any definite style—he sent the priest, and the priest went without complaining, and did the best he could for the people. The support came somehow. If the Kentucky missionaries did not originate the saying that man wants but little here below, they, at least, proved it to be a fact.

The hardships of the missions began to tell upon the health of Father Chambige, and Bishop Flaget called him to Bardstown, where he again taught his favorite sciences for four years and served as treasurer of the College. In 1844, he went to France to arrange some family affairs, and, at the same time, he attended to some important business for Bishop Flaget. Whatever the business was, it was satisfactorily transacted, and he returned in 1846, to take his old place at St. Joseph's College where he remained until his appointment as Superior of St. Thomas' Seminary, March 25, 1850.

Such is a brief outline of the earlier life of Father Chambige, and his later life was in keeping with the

first part. There was nothing wonderful or extraordinary in it; just a plain record of a man of God doing the work of God without ostentation, in whatever position it was God's will to place him. The remainder of his history will be seen interwoven in the life of the Seminary with which he was thereafter identified.

The details of the re-opening of St. Thomas' are sufficiently full to give us to understand that it was re-opened, both as a preparatory and a theological seminary, and that it was an orphanage at the same time. The first male orphans, officially cared for by the Diocese of Louisville, were housed under the roof of old St. Thomas' Seminary. There were ten of them when Father Chambige took charge of the institution.

The Sisters of Nazareth were engaged to attend to the domestic affairs of the Seminary, such as the kitchen, the refectory, the wardrobe and the infirmary, and at the same time, they assumed the immediate care of the orphans. In a year or two the number of orphans had increased to thirty, and a separate house was built for them, but they remained under the care of the Sisters until 1857, when the Brothers of the Sacred Heart took charge of the orphanage, and left the Sisters free to devote all their time to the Seminary. Four Sisters came in 1850, and that number remained through all the years of this epoch in the life of St. Thomas'. Sister Clementia Payne was their superior at the time of their coming, and, amidst the changes and vicissitudes of nineteen years, she remained superior until the removal of the students to Bardstown in 1869.

The first class in theology under Father Chambige was composed of John Boyle, Patrick Bambury, John F. Reed, John M. Beyhorst, Michael Power, Joseph

Elder, Patrick Guilfoyle, Patrick Sheeran, Joseph Roetzer, and a Mr. O'Connor, who died at St. Thomas' before completing the course of study. Shortly afterwards these were joined in their theological studies by Edmund O'Driscoll, Eugene Daly, Wm. Bourke, E. H. Brandts and the two subdeacons from Europe, Joseph De Vries and Van Emstede. These were all ordained within the next few years, but now they are of the past generation—gone!

Beginners for the preparatory course were not long in coming. In 1852, Engelbert M. Bachmann, from St. Boniface's parish in Louisville, entered St. Thomas', the first of a new line that recalled the days when there were fifteen at St. Thomas' and double that number of vocations ready.

The year 1853 witnessed many improvements at St. Thomas', and was really the year of its full-fledged installation with a patronage that justified the name of seminary. In 1853, Bishop Spalding returned from Europe, bringing with him a number of young ecclesiastics, and this event gave to St. Thomas' what now would be called its first great boom.

Some of these ecclesiastics had not yet completed their studies, and they entered St. Thomas' as students, while others of them became professors in the same institution. This same year, the preparatory classes were greatly strengthened by the arrival of new students. From the diocese of Louisville came Wm. Dunn, James Martin, John Barrett and Eugene M. Crane, and among those from other dioceses were John M. Mackey, John B. Murray and Michael O'Donoghue, of Cincinnati; John Mohr, of Alton, and Edward Bushe, of Pittsburg. The teaching faculty was consti-



REV. P. DE FRAINE.



REV. L. BAX.



REV. MARTIN CHAZAL.



REV. JAS. MARTIN.





tuted with Father Chambige as Superior and professor of moral theology ; Father Lavialle, professor of dogmatic theology and Scripture ; Father Bax, professor of philosophy, and Father Chazal, as teacher of French. It is not recorded what arrangements were made for the lower classes, but a prospectus, issued at this time, gives us an idea of how that part of the work was done. This Prospectus also shows that St. Thomas' was losing its character of a strictly diocesan seminary and assuming that of a general preparatory seminary.

#### PREPARATORY SEMINARY OF ST. THOMAS', NEAR BARDSTOWN, KENTUCKY.

With a view to afford to such youths as feel an inclination for the Ecclesiastical state an opportunity to ascertain and pursue their vocation, a Preparatory Seminary has been opened at St. Thomas', near Bardstown.

The better to forward this object, the terms have been fixed as low as possible. They are:

Boarding, washing, mending, books and stationery.. . . . \$60.00.

The above with clothing furnished..... 85.00.

Payments to be made invariably half-yearly in advance.

The course of instruction embraces the branches preparatory to the Ecclesiastical studies. There is but one session of ten months, beginning on the first Monday in September.

Students are received from any part of the Union. In all cases a certificate of good character from the pastors of the applicants is required.

For their own benefit and that of the Orphan Asylum, with which the Seminary is connected, the students will be employed one or two hours every day, in teaching or otherwise, in the institution. At present there are in the Preparatory Seminary twenty-one students, seven of whom are from other dioceses.

For further particulars the public is referred to the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Louisville, or to F. Chambige, Superior.

This healthy growth in St. Thomas', and the prospect of a still greater increase, made it necessary to provide more and better accommodations for the students, and the last of the large buildings was erected. It was a brick structure, 32x68, two stories high, attached to the main building, and containing a large study hall on the first floor with class-rooms, and a dormitory, chapel and other convenient rooms above. The new structure added a great improvement to the old crowded quarters, and made St. Thomas' quite a commodious and comfortable seminary for those days, and equivalent for all purposes until the birth of a new and more active spirit of progress after the war.

But few of those whose names I have enumerated are alive today. The venerable Fathers Bax and Brady are the sole survivors of the professors, and Fathers E. M. Crane, D. F. Crane and E. M. Bachmann are the only living links in the chain connecting the present clergy of Kentucky with those of the initial classes over fifty years ago. The first preparatory student of the new era of St. Thomas' is with us yet, and in his life there has been that which will justify a brief notice.

Engelbert M. Bachmann was born in 1838, in the Black Forest of Baden, Germany. His family came to Louisville in 1851, and the following year he entered St. Thomas' Seminary where he studied for seven years. He went to Cincinnati in 1859, for his theological studies, and was ordained on August 15, 1862, by Bishop Spalding in the Cathedral of Louisville, with Rev. T. J. Disney and Rev. J. A. Barrett. His first work was assisting Rev. F. X. Van Deutekom at St. Mary's church, on Eighth street, Louisville. Two years later he was given charge of St. Andrew's, just outside the city.





REV. T. J. DISNEY.



REV. E. M. BACHMANN.



RT. REV. MSGR. MACKEY.



REV. M. POWER.

The most serious event in his career occurred on August 6, 1866. On that date he was a passenger on the steamboat, General Lytle, from Louisville to Cincinnati. That boat began one of its usual races with a rival boat, the St. Charles, and at Madison, Indiana, the boilers of the General Lytle exploded, killing and maiming a number of those on board. Father Bachmann was so severely injured that for a time his life was despaired of, and he has ever since been a partial invalid. The company would allow him no compensation, but the U. S. Admiralty Court give him damages to the amount of \$6,000, which was reduced one-half upon appeal to the U. S. Circuit Court. The specious, but prejudiced, plea was that he was a priest, and had no wife and children dependent upon him. It required just five years for the court to unearth that much wisdom.

In 1872, Father Bachmann was appointed pastor of St. Joseph's church at Owensboro, but that position proving too much for his strength, he was associated in 1878, with Father Lawler at St. Patrick's in Louisville. Here again his strength was unequal to the work, and he was made Chaplain to the Good Shepherd Convent on Bank Street in 1881. He filled this office until 1902, when he was appointed to his present position as Chaplain to St. Anthony's Hospital. In his life Father Bachmann has ever been a model of the quiet, devoted and conscientious priest, and he never had an enemy among the friends of God.

## CHAPTER XIV.

First Provincial Council of Cincinnati.—Provincial Seminaries.—Theological Seminary at Cincinnati.—Preparatory at St. Thomas'.—A Vanishing Generation.—Personnel of the Faculty.—Changes.—Father O'Driscoll.—Withdrawal of the Cincinnati Students.—War Times.—Dangers.—Morgan's Men.—Execution of a Soldier.—The Sick Confederates at St. Thomas'.—Sister Mary Louis.—Father Cooney.—Other Incidents and Inconveniences.

In 1855, Archbishop Purcell called a Council of the Bishops of the Province to meet at Cincinnati on May 13th. On the second day of the Council the question of the education of candidates for the priesthood was taken up and discussed. The discussion led to the conclusion that the establishment of separate diocesan seminaries was not advisable, as they could not be attended by a sufficient number of students, nor supplied with the teachers necessary to insure good theological training. The country was yet too sparsely settled to furnish the students, and the services of all the priests was required on the missions. The plan of a general seminary was recommended, to the support of which all the dioceses would contribute, and where all the students would be sent. Archbishop Purcell offered his Seminary of Mount St. Mary's at Cincinnati as this general institution for the Province, and the Council made it the Provincial Seminary for the teaching of philosophy and theology.

This opened the way for Bishop Spalding, for similar reasons, to secure for his Seminary of St. Thomas the same standing in the Province as a Preparatory Seminary, and it was so recognized, with a reservation



by the Bishop of Vincennes of the privilege of sending a few of his students where they would learn German, which was necessary in parts of his diocese, owing to the influx of German settlers into Indiana.

The work of Bishop Spalding in securing the action of the Provincial Council in favor of St. Thomas', resulted in an increased roll of sixty-three preparatory students for the following term, while five of his own theologians, who were near their ordination, remained to complete their theological studies. The course of studies was broadened to include German, and the Rev. Christian Kauder was made its teacher, and Rev. Bienvenu Fontaine was assigned to rhetoric and astronomy. Eight tutors and prefects were added to the general staff from the body of the students, and thus constituted, the Seminary was ever afterwards conducted, with only personal changes from time to time. A change from the former rates was made, and the tuition was raised to \$85.00 and \$115.00 per session of ten months.

The next few years were years of prosperity for St. Thomas', and the students profited well by the advantages offered to them. There were men there then who were to stand in evidence in after times, and they never showed any cause why their old Seminary should be rated in any but the first rank. These are the years when, in addition to the early students already mentioned, we meet the names of Michael Tierney, Henry Joseph Richter, Thomas M. Lenihan, James Callaghan, David Russell, Michael D. Lawler, Terence J. Disney, Martin Flynn, James Smith, C. J. Lowrey, Charles Bolte, James McNeirny, Michael Ryan, Adolph

Ahlers, Francis King, Dominic F. Crane, James McNamee and others of equal worth. A search for the bearers of these names shows us that they now belong to the vanishing generation, and occupy the middle ground, as it were, between the living and the dead.

In 1856, Father Lavialle was promoted to the presidency of St. Mary's College, and Father Bax was made pastor of St. John's Church in Louisville. Rev. Edmund O'Driscoll was given a place on the faculty and, at the same time, he succeeded Father Chambige as pastor of St. Thomas' Church. In 1857, the Rev. Hugh Brady replaced Rev. B. Fontaine, and in 1859, he himself was succeeded by Rev. Peter De Fraine, and Rev. J. F. Reed was added to the teaching force. In 1860, Father De Fraine was assigned to parish work. From now until after the war, the Catholic Directory gives no information regarding St. Thomas', but more than one change was made during that time, and among the professors were Fathers Barrett, Fermont and Martin, and later Fathers Russell, Crane and Creary.

Of all the professors none filled the requirements of his position better than Father O'Driscoll. Father Chambige absolutely relied upon him, and the students were thoroughly devoted to him. From 1856 to 1862, he almost controlled the internal affairs of the Seminary, and his leaving was looked upon as a calamity. He died March 28, 1884, pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Catskill, N. Y., and the following is a part of a tribute to his memory, written by Rev. Wm. Bourke who knew him from his early manhood.

"Father O'Driscoll was a man of no common parts. He was methodical, strong in mind and clear in judg-



REV. WM. BOURKE.



REV. EDM. O'DRISCOLL.



RT. REV. H. J. ALERDING.



RT. REV. T. M. LENIHAN.



ment. Whilst in the Seminary he did not fail to teach, and strongly impress on the students, the necessity of solid, practical and thorough studies. A great scholar himself, and a hard student, by example no less than by precept, he so shaped the minds of those with whom he came in contact, that in after days nearly all retained a taste for solid studies. Hence his leaving was regretted by all, but by none more than the Rev. President, Father Chambige, who, more than once, said that Father O'Driscoll's leaving had deprived him of his right arm. He was beloved by the students. \* \* \* And so, one by one, the old veterans have passed away. The Preparatory Seminary of St. Thomas is a thing of the past, and with it that admirable spirit that prevailed there. The men who shaped and moulded the minds and hearts of its young students are gone to their long homes. The saintly Lavialle, the venerable and devoted Chambige, and now the cultured and lovable O'Driscoll, all have passed to their rest,—gone to receive the reward of their unselfish labors, strong in the hope of receiving that crown which is the reward of faith, hope and charity, and which abideth forever."

None of the earlier professors are now living except the venerable Fathers Bax and Brady, and of the later ones, only Father Creary who labors in the ministry in Wisconsin, and Father E. M. Crane who teaches still, but at St. Mary's College in Marion county. I do not know how successful he is now, but I do know that if he has retained his old ways with the students, he will be held in loving memory by at least another generation.

In view of the coming war that threatened to make Kentucky its battle ground in the West, Archbishop Purcell deemed it prudent to provide for his seminarians at home, and a preparatory course of study was opened at his Seminary of Mount St. Mary's of the West. The loss of so many students affected St. Thomas' for a time, but the loss was soon made up by students from other dioceses, especially in Indiana and in far-away New England.

The war period opened in 1861, and from this time on in my work, I realize that I shall be treading on delicate and dangerous ground, for it is the domain of the living. But very few while alive are rated as heroes. It is said that no man is a hero to his valet, and we are so close to one another that our eyes act as microscopes to pick out the little things of life, while the larger things require a more distant view. The torch of fame is lighted but from the last flicker of the lamp of life, and burns only over the ashes of its hero. I have no desire to pay compliments or give unmerited praise. I would rather spare the modesty of the living, but, if by chance, I should say anything that might provoke a disclaimer, I now offer my plea in extenuation, that it will be only an individual opinion, honestly and conservatively expressed, and furthermore that I lay no claim to infallibility.

The years of the war were trying times for St. Thomas' and its inmates. Both armies held the territory in turn, and then the guerrillas made it their lurking place. The famous raiders of John Morgan foraged for a time in the vicinity, but the prowling band of the irresponsible Sue Munday was most to be





REV. E. M. CRANE.



REV. J. A. BARRETT.



REV. D. F. CRANE.



REV. P. HAESELEY.



feared, for its members respected no man's sympathies, but preyed on the country, for what purpose it was past finding out. Then the Home Guards, dressed in a little brief authority, made themselves obnoxious by their insolence. Still, no very serious damage was done at the Seminary, and the studies were not interrupted. Occasionally some of the students were halted on their usual walks but were released after explanations. Naturally there was a feeling of insecurity, for no one knew when some lawless, roving band might pounce upon them and commit depredations through sheer wantonness. Once a couple of the students, who had taken passage to St. Rose's with the mail carrier, were stopped by a force of Morgan's men. The students lost their new overcoats and were glad to get off so easily, but an officer took the mail man's fine horse, leaving in its place his own nondescript. The most disagreeable feature of the adventure for the young men was, that the driver grumbled during the rest of the journey and seemed to blame them for his loss.

On another occasion the brutality and severity accompanying war were brought closely under their observation. A soldier named Calhoun killed a hog, the property of a Mr. Sutherland in the neighborhood of the Seminary. In addition to the act, he threatened to kill the owner if he would dare report him to the commanding officer. In spite of the threat, Mr Sutherland reported the depredation and Calhoun was punished, but, true to his word, he sought out his accuser and deliberately shot him to death. For his crime Calhoun was tried by court-martial at Bardstown, found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. Petitions were sent to

Washington asking for a modification of the sentence, but President Lincoln refused to interfere in the case. The execution of the condemned man was made more impressive by the presence of many thousand soldiers drawn up about the gibbet. The doomed soldier made a brief speech to his comrades, then, cool and unmoved, but without any show of bravado, submitted to his fate. The execution took place near the Seminary and was witnessed by some of the students on their holiday walk.

The sympathies of Father Chambige were with the South, but he showed the same civilities towards the soldiers of both sides. Only once was he specially indignant with the Federal soldiers, and the occasion was as follows: Lieutenant Brown, son of Governor Brown, of Georgia, and a private soldier from an Arkansas regiment, both sick of fever, were given shelter and care at the Seminary by Father Chambige. The negroes about the place reported the matter to the Union forces, which were pushing back Bragg's invading army, and a detachment under Lieutenant Kelly, of a Pennsylvania regiment, was sent to arrest the rebels. Before the inmates were aware of it, the Seminary was surrounded by cavalymen, posted in such a manner as to prevent the escape of any one. The Federal officer made his way to the infirmary, but finding the Confederate Lieutenant too sick to be removed, he paroled him. The invalid afterwards spoke appreciatively of the considerate and kindly manner in which the Union Lieutenant had treated him. Lieutenant Kelly expressed his dislike of having to disturb the quiet of the Seminary, but he was a soldier, he

said, and must obey orders. He added that he was a Catholic, a graduate of Georgetown, D. C., and son of Judge Kelly, of Philadelphia. Before leaving, he detailed a sergeant with a squad to search for the Confederate private who had disappeared. The sergeant showed himself a bully and a coward. He threatened with his revolver one of the professors because he could not inform him of the whereabouts of the rebel soldier. Later, the fellow rode up to one of the Sisters and as her answer to his inquiry was not satisfactory, he pointed his pistol at her and threatened to shoot her. Looking fearlessly at him, she said derisively: "You are, indeed, a very brave soldier, to threaten to shoot a woman!" Sister Mary Louis was the actor in this episode, and she still lives at Nazareth filling, these many years, the office of Sacristan of the chapel.

The private soldier was not captured. His sickness was not very serious, and in his homespun suit he passed in and out among the workmen unnoticed.

Lieutenant Brown was in a very serious condition with typhoid, and hung between life and death for days, and, after God, there is no doubt that he owed his life to the care and skillful nursing of Sister Ida. Before he left he was a great favorite with the students, and came to have a high regard for Catholics and Catholic institutions, although he said, that, when he was first brought to the Seminary, he would just as soon have been thrown into hell, as he believed he had no chance for his life among Catholics. He had never seen a Catholic priest or Sister before coming to the Seminary, as he came from the interior of Georgia where no sign of Catholicity had, up to that time, penetrated. When

leaving the Seminary he presented Father Chambige with his horse and saddle, through gratitude for the care given him. This also was reported to the Union troops, and a squad came and appropriated the horse. This so roused the indignation of Father Chambige that he could not designate this act of war other than as highhanded robbery, and its perpetrators as horse thieves.

A pleasant diversion from such scenes was when Father Cooney, Chaplain of the 35th Indiana regiment, visited the Seminary and brought the regimental band to serenade the students. The band discoursed sweet music for a time, and the musicians were in turn regaled with refreshments. The 35th was a Catholic regiment, and before leaving the vicinity of St. Thomas' all its members went to confession and holy communion.

The burning of the bridge over the Beech Fork between St. Thomas' and Bardstown, was a great inconvenience for the Seminary. Supplies were scant at best, but this made them more difficult to procure. The diet was, in consequence, upon a war footing during these years, and to tell the truth, it never quite returned to a peace footing afterwards, yet, whatever Father Chambige and the other professors had, the students had the same, so that there was not much grumbling.

To keep the Seminary open during the war, even when the roar of cannon could be heard, was no small achievement. St. Joseph's College closed, the female academy at Nazareth lost more than half its patronage, and St. Mary's College barely existed. St. Thomas'



kept up its normal attendance and did not lose a day. Its students came principally from States that did not secede, and the profession of arms was foreign to their hopes. Outside of Kentucky the war did not materially affect their financial resources, and as long as they were willing to put up with the possible conditions of the Seminary and the occasional incivilities of the military, they might pursue their studies in peace. As a rule, the soldiers respected the religious character of the Seminary and the students, and no exaggerated reports of danger drove any student away, or kept at home any notable number of others who might otherwise have come to St. Thomas'.

These external conditions being not unfavorable, it rested with Father Chambige to steer the course of the Seminary clear of other dangers, and by his tactful management he succeeded in keeping it in comparatively smooth waters.

## CHAPTER XV.

Search for Contraband.—A Sick Boy's Imagination.—Strenuous Life.—Unity and Diversity.—The Debating Society.—Characteristic Names.—Chatty O'Brien.—Saxon and "The Bully Times."—Soldier Priests.—Literary Golden Days.—"The Meddler".—Previous Journals.—Strenuous Sports.—Earnest Study.—The Professors.—Religious Life.—Veterans of the War Period.

It would be wonderful if there were no little ruffles on the surface of life as it flowed on inside the bounds that shut out the great world. Besides the incidents already mentioned, there was one that was particularly annoying. A gang of the Home Guards invaded the place one night and demanded of the prefect, James P. Ryan, to be taken through the house on a search for contraband of war. The prefect told them that he had no authority to take them through the house, but that he would take them to the Superior who would do the rest. Father Chambige suppressed his indignation at this uncalled-for act of officiousness, and quietly showed them over the premises. Their search was not rewarded by the finding of so much as a toy pistol, and they shamefacedly sneaked away.

Shots were sometimes heard at night, and one of the negro boys of the place got a scratch from a pistol ball. So expectant of such visits did they become that a student, sick in the infirmary, imagined one night that he heard some one in the next room sharpening a knife with which to murder him. In his fright he rushed to the prefect's room with the announcement that the guerrillas were in the infirmary. An investi-



REV. JAS. P. RYAN.



REV. T. J. JENKINS.



REV. J. A. CREARY.



REV. A. J. HARNIST.



gation was made with the only result of finding a Kentucky hog rubbing against the foundations outside to sharpen his razor back.

The inner life at St. Thomas' was, perhaps, more strenuous during the war times than at any other period in the existence of the Seminary. The times themselves had something to do with this, but the class of students there during these years was a little out of the ordinary. There were men there who had seen some of the world, and who took more than a passing interest in public affairs; some, too, who had been great readers, and were well versed in history, literature and political science. Altogether, they averaged higher in age and in general knowledge and experience than those who came after them. There were, of course, the inevitable inequalities in mental endowments and mental development, and, coming from different parts of the country, they bore the impress of local ideas, and were variously tinged with local feeling. One in matters of faith, hope, charity and religion, they differed widely upon questions of business, politics and policy. With these, and the other little variations of nature common to all communities, it was to be supposed that the pot would boil somewhat violently at times when the supply of inflammable material was a little more plentifully gathered under it. Political questions had now become national issues, and their echo necessarily reached St. Thomas'. Their consideration was generally moderate as became men not vitally interested, yet there was some keen interest shown on both sides.

The winter of '60-'61 saw the formation of the Debating Society. It began with no small array of talent. "Abe Lincoln" made a model chairman; "Ann Arbor" was an authority on rules of order and debate; "Black Jim" was an admirable objector and critic; "Saxon" was great at an argument; "Chatty O'Brien" furnished an outlet for their fun-loving souls; "Dod" poured oil on the troubled waters, and "Red Jim" and "Jeff", with Doherty, Crane, Byrne, Stick, Schnell, Harnist, Bennett and a host of others were in the ranks well to the front. Those whose "pet names" are given, need no more definite designation to recall them to the old circle. Some of them are alive yet, and it would be a breach of propriety to point them out. They got the names from some real or fancied analogy or characteristic, except O'Brien, who had another pseudonym, which was exchanged for the present one after a great friend of his at a public reading called the author of the *Genius of Christianity*, "Chatty-o-briend". Poor Chatty did not remain long at St. Thomas', and the only report ever afterwards received of him placed him as captain in a colored regiment fighting for the Union.

Chatty was not the only one to lay down "the sword of the spirit", and buckle on the sword of the flesh. Saxon, who was a Southern fire eater, made his preparation openly, and rode away in great state to help the cause of the South. His going was not greatly regretted, for his ardent Southern patriotism, coupled with a lack of appreciation of the humorous, was near being the cause of a tragedy at the Seminary. The students had established a college paper which was given the name of "The Bully Times". Bennett was



chosen editor-in-chief, and Dominic Crane was his associate. Among the articles contributed was one whose author will not be named, as he is now a prominent pastor in a diocese of the Middle West. At that time the Southern States were rapidly going out of the Union, and this article reported a supposed meeting of delegates at a city in a Northern State, where an act of secession was passed and one of the good, pious students of St. Thomas' was unanimously elected President of the Confederacy amidst the loudest cheers and the greatest enthusiasm. Saxon failed to see any humor in the skit, but took it as an insult to the chivalry of the South. There was as much ridicule as wit in it, and this so angered Saxon, that a tragedy was averted only by the influence of mutual friends. It was so serious that the author's holding in this vale of tears was, for some time, hardly worth purchasing. The affair finally blew over, but the corpse of "The Bully Times" was buried on the field of battle. Saxon was the great sleeper of the Seminary, and it was reported that he was caught napping while in the Confederate army and taken prisoner by the enemy.

Another student to go a-soldiering was Victor A. Schnell, now a pastor at Terre Haute, Indiana. He was not a willing volunteer, but a victim of the draft, and not being able to hire a substitute, he donned the blue and marched with Sherman to the sea. It is to be hoped that he gets a liberal pension, for he must know many places where he could put it to good use.

The military history of St. Thomas' would not be complete without the mention of another priest who, in his younger days, went to the defense of his country

in its hour of need. This was Robert Byrne, who was one of Kentucky's contingent to serve under Gen. Jackson at New Orleans in 1815. A comrade writing home said of young Byrne, that he carried his cartridges in one pocket and his prayerbook and beads in the other. He entered St. Thomas' shortly after returning from New Orleans and was ordained in 1825. Most of his priestly life was spent as pastor of Holy Cross where he was greatly loved. He died a holy death in 1856, at the age of 64 years. Father Wuyts was with him in his last illness, and had just finished the offering of the holy mass for him in his room on the morning of April 7, when he calmly expired.

But, to return to our history: After the departure of the warlike spirits from St. Thomas', peace settled on the little community, and the gentler arts flourished wonderfully. This was the time that saw the golden age of literature at St. Thomas', and the Debating Society was the moving cause of the intellectual outpouring. When the brighter minds of that lustrum left St. Thomas' for higher studies, their disciples continued the movement, but with lessening force. Occasionally afterwards there was a flashing up of genius, but the steady light of the intellect was never again as bright or as universal.

Another journal, called "The Meddler," was established before the close of the literary era, and was filled with notes and personals, poetry and fiction, bits of travel and literary composition, but it never indulged in anything violent like the "Bully Times", so that it was able to die a natural death, which it did after a year or two.

The best essays read before the Debating Society, after passing through the hands of the appointed critics, were preserved in a special book, and it was the ambition of every one of the members to write something worthy of preservation. Another manuscript book treasured by the same society was the first, and rather successful, attempt of a student at a literary work of any considerable extent. Its title, as I now recall it, was "Domremy, or 'The Cradle of Joan,'" and is sufficiently suggestive of the nature of the work. It was read with great admiration by later students, and its author has since become known in the world of letters.

The literary movement, however, was not born during the war times. It always existed at St. Thomas' and showed considerable activity in the fifties. During that decade, at least two college journals were established, and were of sufficient importance to leave an impression to this day on the memory of the students of those years. The first of these bore the title of "Utopia," and its editors were Michael Ryan and Adolph Ahlers. It could not have lived very long, for one of the editors—Ahlers—was a contributor to a second publication called "The Cider Press," whose editor was Francis King. Ahlers wrote a wierd article for the "Cider Press," of a mysterious Christmas visit to Bethlehem, in the company of a party of Trappist Monks of dreamy reality, or in astral bodies, as modern theosophists would say, and, by some strange action of fate, that article from the old "Cider Press" lived for half a century to be republished in the last Christmas number of "The Record," of Louisville.

The men who showed such activity of mind were not lacking in activity of body, and their very sports were of the strenuous order. Football, in the good old style when it was a kicking match, was popular, and many a bruised ankle and torn shin attested the vigor with which the game was played. Other games were just as earnest, and it was a feature at that time, that the younger of the Reverend Professors entered with equal zest into the recreations and took their share of the hard knocks without a protest, and none was esteemed the less, or revered below his rank, because he could throw off his cassock and lead in the sternest of athletic contests. Sometimes a trick was played on a student, but there was no hazing of new men, or anything that bordered on rowdyism. There were no Alpha Sigma Sigma or other kindred Greek letter societies, no College Yell, not even a College Song with any local application nearer than the Old Kentucky Home, which at the approach of vacation, took on the variation:

Let us sing with joy as we've often done before,  
All merry, all happy and bright,  
For our books are thrown aside, and our studies now  
are o'er,

Then our old Kentucky home, good-night !  
We will bend no more over lessons hard to learn,  
Over pages of classical lore,  
We will sing no more by the glimmer of the moon,  
On the bench by the study-hall door.

Weep no more, companions,  
Weep no more today,  
We will sing one song for our old Kentucky home  
Ere we go to meet our friends far away.

But vacation brings a shadow to the heart,  
Along with its joys and delights,  
For the time has come when, companions, we must part;  
Then, our old Kentucky home, good-night!  
A few more days, we will all be far away,  
And buoyant with youthful delight;  
We will revel with our friends 'mid the scenes of other days,  
Then our old Kentucky home, good-night!

Sleep was sweet to such energetic men, and we can hardly blame Saxon for trying to get a little more of it than the law of early rising allowed. All of us know that it is that very point of college discipline that costs most to the student.

In their other studies the students put the same energy, and class discussions were at times very spirited. The teachers had reason to be satisfied with their pupils, and the pupils could not complain of any lack of interest on the part of the professors. In fact, they spoke very highly of them; of Father Chambige and his prudent management, that kept things going on within the Seminary much the same as if no national convulsion was shaking the land. It is true, that there was some complaining on the subject of food, but when we consider that the place was overrun by two armies, the guerrillas and the Home Guards in succession, we must acknowledge that Father Chambige, and Sister Clementia with her corps of assistants, did very well towards making the best of a bad situation. This also was equally true, that no one with an appetite need ever go hungry. They spoke highly of Father Chazal, "the dear little prefect of studies," who was also leading professor of the ancient and modern languages; of Fathers O'Driscoll and Reed, who taught mathe-

matics, rhetoric and the sciences ; of Father De Fraine, the learned licentiate of the University of Louvain, who, for the short time that he was there, dazed them with his knowledge of the Roman poets and his fluency in speaking Latin ; of Father Martin, the Roman Doctor, the most fluent of all in speaking Latin, and a most lucid and successful exponent of mental and moral philosophy, and of Fathers Fermont and Barrett, for all of whom they had only words of praise and pleasant recollections.

The study of this portion of the lives of the students of that time would lead us to the opinion that they were men of strong minds, strong bodies and strong wills, and that they used the strength of all of them. Many of them were such, but they were men of strong souls also, and could turn all this strength to the fulfillment of the Great Commandment in the Law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind."

To hear them speak, without any thought of boasting, of the religious exercises of the Seminary, one would think that works of piety were almost their whole occupation. When Christmas drew near they went into the woods to bring great loads of evergreens, and spent days in decorating the Church and Sodality Chapel with wreaths and festoons, and an almost innumerable number of lights for that great festival. The Midnight Mass was a grand function, and the *Adeste Fideles* came from hearts filled and running over with emotion, and if a tear fell they did not feel ashamed of it, nor did they attempt to hide it. They







REV. EDWIN DRURY.



REV. M. MELODY.



REV. J. P. MCINCROW.



V-REV. C. P. GRANNAN.

could become as little children in thought and feeling, and when the sweet and solemn services were over, could, like little children, lie in wait for one another and for their unsuspecting professors, and surprise them with a merry "Christmas Gift!"

The men who braved the fortunes of war to study at St. Thomas' must have been made of stern stuff, and we should naturally expect to hear from them in their after years. Nor are we disappointed in our expectations. Their probation at St. Thomas' in these trying times, was a fitting prelude to the courage they have shown, and the work they have accomplished since going into active service. We hear from them in Bishop Byrne, of Nashville; Bishop Tierney, of Hartford; Bishop Ryan, of Alton, and Bishop Alerding, of Ft. Wayne; in the Very Rev. Fathers O'Callaghan and Grannan; in the Rev. Fathers Cusack, Cull, Fladung, Siebenfoercher, Mackey, Doyle, Crowley, Pilcher, Doherty, Quinn, Geyer, Kennedy and Campbell, of Ohio; in Fathers Sondermann, Fleischmann, Spelman, Schnell, Gilling, Peters and McBarron, of Indiana; in Fathers Rafter, Wheeler, McManus, Pulcher, Reichenbach and Schmittiel, of Michigan; in Fathers Stick, Winterhalter and Bennett, of Illinois; in Fathers Ryan, Smyth, Johannes and McGowan, of Iowa; in Fathers Crane, Harnist, Drury, Jenkins, Daly, Plaggenborg, Dillon, Hogarty, Melody, McConnell, Haeseley, Redmond, Smith and Ben. Spalding, of Kentucky, and in Fathers Ronan, Fitz-Boland, McIncrow, O'Donovan, Tuite, Mallon, Bennett, Daily, Englert and Samuel Spalding, besides many others from different States. Some of these are dead. They

died in honor as they had lived ; many of them are still in life, and hold the esteem of congregations that they have built up, served and edified. I might single out a score of the pre-eminent ones, but their works speak for them. They are sufficiently known, and the reader will have no difficulty in allotting the merited measure of praise that I dare not openly give. It is a galaxy of names that stand well in the Church, and old St. Thomas', if it were now in existence, might take pardonable pride in remembering its war students.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Looking Forward and Backward.—Father Abell's Golden Jubilee.—Visits of Bishops.—Examinations and Commencements.—Fast Trains.—Removal to Bardstown.—Father Russell.—Last Class at St. Thomas'.—Deaths, Dismissals and Lapses.—“A Hole in the Fence.”

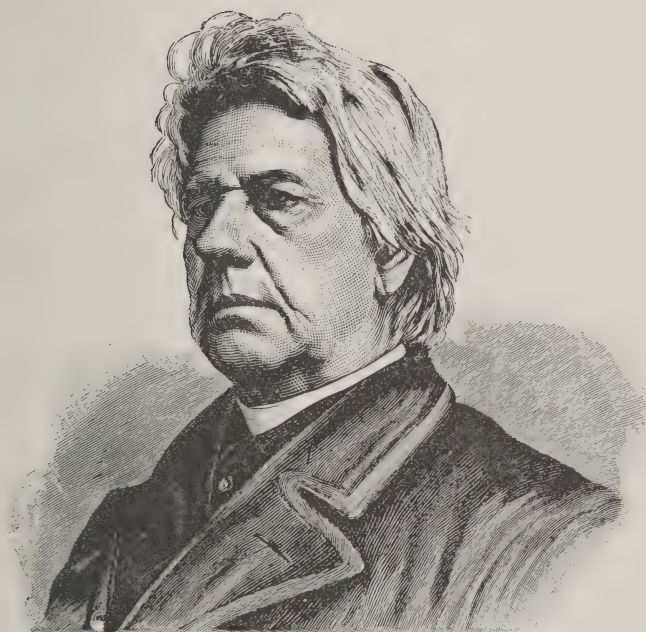
At old St. Thomas' it could hardly be said that events hurried on thick and fast. It was just about the same round, week after week and month after month. The Christmas holidays came to relieve the strain of looking for Easter, and Easter was a resting-place of our longings for vacation. Our studies this year were but an introduction to what we would do next year. We were young, then, and the young live in the future, the old in the past. When we become reminiscent we are growing old; St. Thomas' students are all reminiscent now.

One special event of 1868 was of no small importance, although not then or since, heralded abroad as anything remarkable. It was the Golden Jubilee of the Patriarch of the priesthood, the first-born of Kentucky's native clergy—the venerable Father Robert A. Abell. Fifty years before he had been raised to the priestly state in the little Church of St. Thomas, and, on the very spot wheré he had received the power of sacrifice, he wished to make its jubilee offering as a thanksgiving for God's mercies to him during fifty years of life at the Altar. The time of the celebration was fixed by Father Abell so as best to accommodate his brother priests, and this made it necessary to an-

ticipate the actual date by some weeks. Father Abell himself sang the Solemn High Mass, with Father Durbin as deacon and Father Elliott as subdeacon. The sermon was preached by Father Schacht, himself an old western missionary, and it must have been equal to the occasion, as I heard no adverse criticisms. I still remember many of the faces as I saw them on that occasion, for it was the first time that I had seen them. It was a gathering that recalls the famous group of 1817. There were no bishops present, but there were those who had upheld the hands of many bishops. Father Abell was there with the merit of fifty years of missionary labor; Father Durbin with his 500,000 miles of apostolic journeyings on horseback; Fathers Aud, Hutchins, Elliott and Coomes with their burden of pioneer toil; Fathers Wuyts, Schacht, DeMuelder, O'Callaghan, Viala, Lacoste, Faunt, Bachmann and Lawler representing past and future labor. The Very Rev. B. J. Spalding bore the honors of the diocese as its administrator, and Father Chambige, with the faculty of the Seminary, represented the work of St. Thomas' through the eighteen years that it had been sending out priests into fields of the Church in America. No doubt, others were there, but I cannot recall them now.

It was a memorable day, and its significance is more plain now than it was at the very time, for in our changed conditions, we can judge by contrast what those fifty years of priesthood meant. Flaget, David and Badin had lived them also, mostly in the same surroundings, and the essentials of all their histories ran in the same channel. They, too, must have been filled individually with the impressiveness of similar





Your devoted Friend  
R. A. Abell



occasions to each of themselves, yet they seemed to have passed them over in their own quiet way, and it is probable that this jubilee of Father Abell was the first of the kind ever celebrated in so solemn a manner in Kentucky.

The visit of a bishop to St. Thomas' was an event of great moment. It was not of frequent occurrence within my recollection,—not as frequent as we might have wished, but as St. Thomas' was not on any of the great thoroughfares, we did not expect it very often. The first bishop to visit the Seminary while I was there, was Bishop McCloskey, of Louisville. It was shortly after his arrival in Kentucky from Rome where he had been consecrated only a short time before. He impressed us most favorably, as he looked every inch a bishop, and his handsome face beamed with evidences of a kind and fatherly heart. On the part of the students, W. P. Hogarty made an address giving expression to our feelings of gladness, welcome and reverence, and presaging a strengthening of faith and zeal, both in the Seminary and in the diocese, aided by the spirit that the new bishop had imbibed at the tomb of the Apostles. When the bishop answered and told us, among other things, that in us was the hope of the Church, and that he esteemed us of such importance that his first official visit to any of his institutions should be made to us, we felt a graver sense of present and future duties. Our hearts went out to him, and his visit was the topic of conversation for many a day. I believe it did us a lasting good.

Another bishop to visit us, and the only other that I remember, was Bishop Machebeuf, of Denver. He

remained over night at the Seminary and said mass for us the next morning. In an address that he made to the students, he spoke of his life in the Far West, and told us of his visits to the miner's camps in Eureka Gulch, Hardscrabble and the Frying Pan, in Fairplay and Buckskin Joe, and of his mission trips lasting for months at a time, when he always carried a supply of provisions with him, and often camped on the plains or in the mountains, preparing his own food and sleeping wrapped in a buffalo robe with the blue sky of heaven for his nearest roof. Some of the students were tempted to volunteer for his missions, but they could not free themselves from their obligations to other dioceses, so he got no one.

The examinations at St. Thomas' were considered serious matters, at least by the students. They were written and oral, and covered the year's work pretty thoroughly. They did not differ from those usual tests in all colleges, but they did not allay the general trepidation, for all knew that they were not merely perfunctory affairs. Papers prepared for these examinations were often read publicly in the refectory, and as publicly discussed. Sometimes they were made a part of the program of the commencement exercises.

The commencements, or exhibitions as they were called, were without display. Father Chambige always presided; the professors were present with a number of the priests of the diocese, and the Sisters of the domestic departments. The premiums were books on various subjects, and many a student preserved for years some of those volumes with that very peculiar signature of Father Chambige upon the fly leaf.

The exhibition was followed by an extraordinary spread of good things for the refectory of nature, and general recreation followed. In the evening, an informal open meeting of the Debating Society was held, at which the professors, guests and brighter students indulged in the "feast of reason and flow of soul." I have forgotten the subject matter of it now, but upon one of those occasions Father Eugene Crane delivered one of the wittiest, and at the same time, one of the most eloquent speeches I had ever heard. There was not much sleep that last night at the Seminary, nor any very strenuous attempt at the preservation of order by the prefects, and by daylight next morning all were astir, and, after mass and an early breakfast, lost no time in covering the three miles and more of pike to catch the only train from Bardstown.

And, that old train! I know of but one that equals it, and that is its successor on the same road extended as far as Springfield. All things, even that train, will come to those who wait, provided they wait long enough. It is one of the sleepest roads in creation, and a sleeping car would be a convenience on the train, if the operators could learn that there are other ways of stopping the distillery cars they take up on the way besides letting them bump into the rest of the train.

Rumors of the closing of old St. Thomas' began to be whispered about during the summer of 1869. No one was disturbed by them, for all knew that better accommodations would result from the change, and so rather welcomed the idea. In October, the change was made, and the students marched in on foot to Bardstown, while the trunks were carried upon the

big wagons that formed part of the cortege. The students numbered about sixty, and nearly one-third of them were from Indiana. Kentucky was a strong second on the list, and little Rhode Island was third. The remainder came from localities well scattered between Boston and San Francisco. The members of the philosophy class of the previous term at St. Thomas' were already domiciled at St. Joseph's and were at work on their theology, but the organization of the house was deferred until the arrival of the preparatory students.

My memory fails to record our parting from Father Chambige and our old professors, but I know we found good teachers and kind fathers at St. Joseph's, and our classes were continued much as usual with a few studies added. Both Father Chambige and Father Russell were assigned to duty at Nazareth, and thenceforward we never missed our accustomed visit to Nazareth on Christmas and Easter while they were there to bid us welcome. Fathers Crane and Creary were given ministerial duty in Louisville, and we saw them but seldom afterwards.

One of the dearest men imaginable was Father Russell, one of our professors at St. Thomas'. Only a few years ago he was laid to rest, and I can speak of him now without reserve, and surely without a thought of contradiction from anyone who knew him.

David Russell was born at St. Charles, Marion county, Kentucky. Through his grandmother on his father's side, Jane Mattingly, he was descended from Leonard Mattingly, one of the pioneers of the Hardin's creek settlement, and thus he was, in some degree,



related to all the Mattinglys of Marion and adjoining counties. His preparatory studies were begun at St. Mary's College and finished at St. Thomas' in 1858. From there he went to Louvain for the study of theology, and was one of the first students to enter the American College just established in that city under the presidency of Monsignor John De Neve.

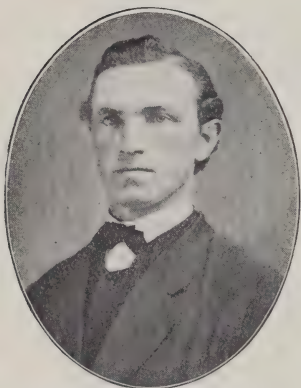
I have a slight leaning towards all those who studied under Msgr. De Neve, for I knew him when he was plain Father De Neve and first pastor of the church at Niles, Michigan. The day he left to return to Belgium was a sad day in that little church and the scene was touching in the extreme. It was a week day, but the whole congregation assembled to hear his last mass and bid him good-bye and Godspeed. There was not a dry eye to be seen. Old men wept; the young and strong broke down, one and all, the women sobbed, and tears rolled down the cheeks of the children. To this day I have never known another priest so loved as Father De Neve was loved by that little congregation. Pardon the digression, but I cannot resist the memory—nor the tear. Father De Neve prepared me for my first Holy Communion and Confirmation, and I was among those from whom he was parting that day. I saw him but once afterwards, eighteen years later, when he was a temporary patient at the Brothers' Sanitarium at Diest, and he was actually hungering for good news from those who had been his spiritual children in his first mission in America.

Father Russell reflected the goodness of Father De Neve. He was one of the few who are recognized while they live as thoroughly good. He was a genuine

Kentuckian, and an example of a gentleman from anywhere without frills. I love to think of him as he was when I first saw him before age had shown its deeper marks. His kindly face attracted and his gentleness was irresistible. His hair then was dark, though the monk's crown was already beginning to shape itself upon his head. A perceptible limp marred his gait and gave him a slight stoop under fatigue. Of a serious turn of mind, he had an unconscious dignity that prevented too great familiarity, yet he was so sympathetic that no one ever went to him in trouble who did not receive comfort, and gain an advocate if his case required one. He was so honest that he had nothing to conceal, and this made him at times plain almost to bluntness with others. I know that he carried his fine qualities with him through life, for the stone on his grave in the cemetery of Nazareth is inscribed "To Dear Father Russell."

Of the last students I should remember all the names, but time dulls even the memory, and names as well as faces are sometimes forgotten. The Catholic Directory has served to fortify recollection, and yearly does it recall them, but by an ever shortening list, which indicates that in a few years more, they will all have gone to join the silent majority. I see them now as I saw them at old St. Thomas' when we called one another by familiar names and nicknames. These have been since changed for more reverend titles, and I can say with truth, that all, or nearly all, of St. Thomas' students have borne the latter with honor and dignity.





REV. B. BRUEGGEMANN.



REV. J. B. KELLY.



REV. T. F. TIERNEY.



REV. DENNIS MACKEY.

Though seldom hearing directly from them, and more seldom seeing them, I still recall Fathers Tierney, Jansen, Abell, Taylor, Whelan, O'Sullivan, Fahrenbach, Civill, Haeseley and Burke, of Kentucky; from Indiana, Rt. Rev. D. O'Donaghue, and Fathers O'Donaghue, Doyle, Pierrard, Brueggemann, Schenck, Merckl, Curran, Kelly, Logan, Ewers, Dickmann, Book, McCabe and Lentz; from Providence, Fathers Coyle, Deady, Goodwin, Murray and McGinney; from other localities, Fathers Galligan, Lovett, Foster, O'Halloran, Hagan, Kempker, O'Gara, and McGinley.

These names come to me now because their bearers became priests, and as such were in my nearer world; some few others found their vocation in other professions, but in my limited experience of the general world I have lost sight of them.

Dismissals for cause from old St. Thomas' were very rare. A student might leave now and then during the year, or might not return after the vacation, but if this was done on the suggestion of the professors they kept it to themselves. The rarity of direct expulsions speaks well for the discipline at St. Thomas' when we consider that some who were there were scarcely more than children.

The only student to die at St. Thomas' while I was there was poor Tom Dinan. He was not very rugged and when pneumonia took hold of him it did its work quickly. A series of coincidences is attached to his case that makes it a little remarkable. His name was Thomas, he was taken sick on the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, December 21, 1868, he died on the feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury, December 29, and was

buried in St. Thomas' cemetery from the Church of St. Thomas. One of the students—the present Father Michael Ronan, of Lowell, Mass.,—made a hardwood cross which was placed over his grave, and the broken and weather-beaten fragments may be seen there yet with the name almost obliterated but legible.

By no means were all the students at old St. Thomas' geniuses. In fact, there were very few such. Most of them were but ordinary young men, and there was sometimes one below the average. I have in my mind now one who might almost be considered an exaggerated example of mediocrity. He dragged himself along for years against difficulties and advice, and was eventually ordained somewhere in Canada. The remark was generally made that he had "crawled through a hole in the fence." Some time after his ordination he was sent to a parish where a man of talent had failed, when, lo! in a short time our dullard had the debt of the church paid, and the religious tone of the people raised to a high standard. He died deeply regretted by a whole diocese. Verily, some of us smart ones may have crawled through a hole in the fence.



## CHAPTER XVII.

Changed Conditions.—The New Life.—Contrasts.—Vain Longings.—Father Abell and Dr. Pise.—Sylvan Studies.—Surroundings of Old St. Thomas'.—Diverse Impressions.—“The Angelus.”—An Orphan Asylum.—Buildings Unsafe and Abandoned.—Decay and Disappearance of the Buildings.—St. Thomas' in 1905.

The removal of the Seminary to Bardstown was well meant and promised great things, but the rosy prospects were not fulfilled. There may be other explanations given for this, but to me, as one of the students looking back through the lapse of time, the case appears somewhat in the following light: The move involved more sweeping changes than we had anticipated, and threw us suddenly out of our accustomed atmosphere. There was a change of buildings, which was for the better; there was a change from the quiet freedom of the country and its simple life to the restraints and forms that a life in town imposed. Then there was a complete change in the governing faculty, and some new ideas of government were put in force. There was scarcely anything left to remind of old St. Thomas' except the faces of the students, and a professor who had been a student there in by-gone days. There was also, that year, a number of new students who had not yet imbibed the spirit of old St. Thomas', and when all these circumstances came at once, it made the place like a new institution that must stand on its own merits, and make its own history without regard to any tradition.

Hardly had we been installed, when an undefined something began to creep into the general life of the Seminary, and to crowd out the old simplicity, unity, and family feeling. Clans and coteries appeared on the surface of our daily life, and congenial spirits began to pair off in couples by themselves. Little plots, in the form of practical jokes, were worked up, and they were not always accepted in a pleasant spirit. The big-hearted, paternal government of Father Chambige was lacking, and the unbending rule of silent submission was yet new. The President, Father De Fraine, was a good and saintly man, but his experience in governing was gained with his parish and parish sodalities. Father Viala, the disciplinarian, was sociable, and even jolly, but he was a great stickler for rule and authority, as became one accustomed to the discipline of a secular college. The seminarians were not used to either of these methods strictly applied, and the authorities got some rude shocks. They, in turn, gave the students a few shocks, and all of this tended to destroy the general harmony. The advantages that Bardstown offered were not those that might be found in a great city, but it did furnish a number of the distractions, and there was visible a little of the result of closer contact with seculars, as Bishop Spalding had noted it years before.

The days of old St. Thomas' then began to appeal to memory, and the appeal gained in force until many wished themselves back again under the old roof. Such longings were vain, for, as a seminary, the doors of homely old St. Thomas' had closed forever.

When possible, our recreations were taken outside of the town in the woods along the Beech Fork, or in

the haunts of former days. A little association with nature helped, even if we took it rather as a distraction and a refreshment than as a teacher of serious things, and we generally returned from such communings a little more like our former selves. There was no lack of nature around old St. Thomas', and to learn lessons from it required only the easy task of getting in touch with it.

The Rev. Dr. Charles C. Pise one day, after listening to Father Abell preaching in the Cathedral of Baltimore, asked him what books he was in the habit of consulting for the preparation of his sermons. Father Abell's answer is worthy of consideration. "Books, Dr. Pise! Why, my dear sir, we have no books in Kentucky, we go to nature for inspiration. The elements are our books, and in them we are able to trace the designs of a beneficent God. Forest and field, hill and dale, sweeping river and purling brook, the bearded grain bending to the zephyr's breath, the lightning's flash and the thunder's roar,—these, and a thousand other things upon which our eyes rest, teem with instruction for us and with inspiration."

The answer was an exaggeration, but there is truth at the bottom of it. The Druids went to the forest to learn from the oak, the hyssop and the mistletoe; Plato gathered the inner circle of his disciples together in his garden, and Aristotle studied in his grove at Stagira and lectured in the wooded walks of the Lyceum. Close communion with nature has the double advantage of shutting out the distractions of the world and of allowing more direct intercourse with God through the medium of His own works.

Old St. Thomas' was situated in the midst of nature. Far enough from town and highway to be beyond the sound of the tramp of the world's parade, it offered an opportunity for study and meditation that a St. Jerome might have envied. The surrounding farms, studded with groves, showed the hand of man without blotting out nature's work, and the general view was of an undulating surface gradually rising to the distant hills whose wooded crests could be seen as far as Muldraugh's Hill and Rohan's Knob. To its own doors came forests of giant beech and stately elm, of waving oak and trembling poplar, and from many ravines almost hidden by thicket of vine and shrub, there flowed out rills of crystal water that went babbling on to feed the greater stream at the foot of the slope. Skirting the grounds, concealed by trees but within easy walk, the Beech Fork, gently laving its sloping banks or dashing between confining cliffs, wound its way to meet its sister stream, the Rolling Fork, near Colesburg. Here and there the earth opened avenues of descent into its very bowels, where hidden wonders of God's creation might be seen and studied. Unbroken forests were there still, as before the day of civilized man, and their solitudes seemed to push away the little things of earth and draw God's immensity nearer. The presence of God could be felt and seen in everything; the birds unconsciously sang His praises; the sighing of the wind through the trees was the murmur of nature's prayer to Him; the song of the brooks was the voice He had given them, and the slow movement of the river through its deeps, and its dancing over the shallows, was the action of the life He had imparted to it. All these, as everything else,

could speak of God, from the silence that now breathed down the valleys to the thunder that again rolled over the summits of the hills, and from the vine that clung to the oak for support to that oak itself which stood upright defying the strength of the hurricane. All could speak of His power, of His care, and of His love for man to whom He gave command over the world, and in whose hands He placed all its riches. "Son, thou art always with me, and all I have is thine."

This was the book that the pioneers used to supplement the poverty of their libraries, and it is a book that may yet be read with profit, or otherwise, as the disposition of the reader may direct.

I am reminded here of what I once heard in connection with that celebrated painting by Francois Millet, called "The Angelus." It will illustrate the foregoing. The picture shows two peasants—a man and a woman—toiling in the fields and loading a barrow with the fruits of their labor. In the distance is a church, the spire of which is gilded by the rays of the setting sun. Suddenly the angelus bell rings out, and at the sound of its tones, they reverently bow their heads, and with clasped hands, recite the prayer. A man looking at the picture was once asked what he saw in it. He replied: "I see a man and a woman digging potatoes." Another came; he stopped to look, and smiled. Asked what he saw, he answered: "I see two persons making love." A third came—almost a child—and gazing at the picture seemed lost in thought. To the same question the answer was returned: "I see God."

The sportsman saw in the surroundings of St. Thomas' a field for his favorite amusement, and the



deep baying of the foxhound was often heard in the woods. The pot-hunter saw in them the prospect of a savory dish, and the sharp crack of his rifle told of the death of a squirrel or an opossum. Father Abell could find in them a book teeming with instruction and inspiration.

The Seminary buildings at old St. Thomas' remained unoccupied for some time after the departure of the students, except as portions of them were used by the pastor of the congregation and the workmen in charge of the farm. But little care was taken of them, and they soon began to show the effects of time. In January, 1872, the Brothers gave up the care of the orphans at St. Thomas' Asylum, and the Sisters of Nazareth again took charge of them. The old Seminary presented better accommodations than the Asylum buildings, and it was fitted up for the Sisters and their little charges. This arrangement lasted until the spring of 1880, when the buildings were pronounced unsafe, and the little orphans were again moved back into the old Asylum. By an accident, in May, 1889, the orphanage took fire and was burned to the ground. At this time the College of St. Joseph had become vacant, and the orphans were transferred to Bardstown, and since that time, that once famous seat of learning has been an orphan asylum. The old buildings at St. Thomas' gradually went to decay and tumbled down. The very material disappeared, so that at this time there are but few positive indications, outside of tradition, that there ever existed at St. Thomas' a Convent, an Orphan Asylum and a Seminary.

A few months ago while in the vicinity, I took advantage of the opportunity to visit the old place, and







REPRESENTATIVE GROUP.

later, I gave an account of my visit in *The Record*, of Louisville. The descriptive portion of that article is pertinent here and with it I close this chapter, and the history proper of Old St. Thomas' Seminary.

My way led out from Bardstown, and who of the old students does not remember the drive—or walk—along the pike from Bardstown to St. Thomas'? Trees shaded its windings to the Beech Fork, and beyond were the familiar spots, such as the toll-gate, Wilson's Grove, Jacktown, the mulberry tree, and various other points of interest. One looks in vain for most of them now. From Bardstown to the Beech Fork the once beautiful road is hedged with distilleries, with their accompanying dirty fattening pens for hogs and cattle. The rest of the road has lost its charm and become commonplace.

When I turned from the pike into the lane leading to old St. Thomas' I found myself on familiar ground. There were less of the stately beeches on the right, but nevertheless, it was the same old lane, and patches of the rough stone paving of long ago were still visible in the road where Father Chambige had made the muddy spots more easily passable. The fences—a combination of wood, stone and hedge—bore their age well, and appeared neither older nor newer than they were as I remembered them. A group of blackened trees stood out in the distance where I looked for the well-remembered roofs,—their dead branches reaching upward like skeleton fingers,—and I thought of the fire-swept tamarack swamps of Michigan in my pioneer days. I did not remember that there was anything of that kind near St. Thomas', but then, my memory might fail me in some things, so I turned to the view of nearer objects.

The large brick building, once used as an asylum for orphan boys, had disappeared—a victim of fire years ago. On its site stood a frame residence apparently unconscious of its crying need of paint and repairs.

The last turn in the lane opened upon a view that was familiar. The thornbush hedge on the right had grown until its branches joined the spreading beeches from the grove on the left. The main portion of that grove, however, had been cleared of the trees where we used to recline *sub tegmine fagi* and was being prepared for a crop of tobacco. Still the view was familiar, for it was the same old lane, and at the lower end of it through the arching trees could be seen the fence, and the gate opening upon the walk that led to the Seminary door.

At the gate itself, how different was the prospect! There was absolutely no Seminary in sight. The old Church still stood; the Sisters' House was there, but the rest was a scene of desolation. The grounds were strewn with fallen trees, while the remainder of those stately elms that were yet standing were dead, and it was their rotting trunks and broken branches that had attracted my attention while coming down the lane. Grass, weeds, brush and logs were in a tangle over what was once the beautiful lawn. The foundations of the buildings could scarcely be traced, but the excavations for cellar and basement were visible, and trees large enough for fence-posts were growing in the very place where we regularly assembled for our daily meals. There was no study-hall, no chapel, no refectory, no bake-house, no play-house, and little that could be recognized as the old play-grounds.

The silvery bell, whose sweet tones we did not always appreciate, seemed to be the only thing saved from the wreck, and it stands on a little covered platform and calls the people to mass. The well in which the old oaken bucket once hung, is still there, and the curb remains, upon which we poised the moss-covered treasure inclined to our lips, but the bucket is gone, and, indeed, it would be useless if it were there, for the well has gone dry.

The Sisters' House, once the home of the saintly Bishop Flaget, and the cradle of Nazareth, seems not to have changed very much, and serves as a comfortable residence for Father Ryan, the zealous pastor of the congregation. The old wash-house—the primeval Seminary—is gone. I traced its outlines in the grass from the stone upon which rested its spacious fireplace and outside chimney. A little while and all knowledge will be lost of the spot upon which stood the humble 18x24 log cabin which sheltered the first aspirants for the priesthood west of the Alleghanies. The old spring-house—who does not remember the old spring-house, with its date of 1818 on the outside and its supply of rich milk on the inside? Well, the old spring-house still stands, and the same streams of cool water bubble forth within it and flow out through a pipe into a trough as formerly, and thence down the ravine to meet the stream from the spout spring. Of the orchard only a few trees are left, and a kitchen garden takes the place of the treasured spot where Father Chambige planted, cultivated, caressed, and actually conversed with his flowers.

The old barn may be said to stand yet, but it is tottering and must soon go the way of destiny in the

wake of the other buildings, of which not a relic remains. The place reminds one of what Jerusalem must have been after the fulfillment of the prophecy that not a stone upon a stone would remain. The traveler from New Zealand might stand there but he would find only one ruin to sketch—that of the dear old Church. That stands, not ill-appearing from a distance, but its cross has tumbled down. The bricks which old Father Abell (Uncle Bob) carried are as bright and firm as ever, but the walls are cracked in front and rear, and the light shines in through the openings. The interior has the old-time look—the same altar, the same little pulpit, the pews, the stations, the pictures, the same little melodeon responding yet when its keys are struck, the same tablet set in the wall to the memory of Thomas Howard and wife, those early benefactors of the Diocese of Bardstown.

In a drizzle of a rain that made the day in keeping with the gloom of the surroundings, I visited the cemetery and found there the same desolation. Several priests and seminarians lie there in forgotten graves, and I thought of the blessed knowledge of the souls, which, at the last day, will not need our markers to enable them to locate the bodies that once were theirs. One single exception I noticed of a well-kept grave, where flowers covered the mound, and an upright stone told the fact that underneath were the ashes of Margaret Abell, the mother of the late venerable Father Abell. This little ray of brightness is due to the thoughtful care and loving remembrance of the present Father Abell, of St. John, Ky.

The material portion of old St. Thomas' has gone, but the material portion was never very much. It



was humble, unpretentious, and always primitive. It had no spacious halls, gymnasium or lecture rooms. Its necessary accommodations were poor, its luxuries *nil*. In this it gave the poor boy a chance, and a poor boy may have a real vocation. Its students made up their own beds, and washed from a tin basin placed on a convenient stump or a log of a woodpile. Zero weather made little difference in this regard. They cut the wood and made the fires that warmed them in winter. Their food left no germ of gout in them, but proved the Kentuckians entitled to the name of Corn-crackers. Their clothing was not such as most people wear when "walking down Broadway," and their everyday manners would not look well in Louisville on Sunday.

Some of the students were thought to lack in polish, and outwardly there may have been some foundation for the judgment, for there was no special course of training there for diplomats and courtiers. There was a training, however, that made the best feel that he would be honored if only allowed to work for God and dear life in the poorest mission of Kentucky. Yet, Old St. Thomas' did not repress men. It offered development to every manly characteristic. It made men self-reliant servants of themselves. It pampered no one, and the influence of the surroundings, both physical and moral, was not favorable to the fostering of any but apostolic ambitions. A very short sojourn at St. Thomas' brought a presuming young man down from his pedestal, or convinced him that his peace of mind would be better preserved elsewhere. The former was generally the result, and there are a few of us alive yet who are illustrations of it.

The absolutely democratic spirit of old St. Thomas' wove itself, with all the rest, into the lives of the students and made them individual parts of one united family that was not broken up by the dispersion of its members. The result was, that St. Thomas' turned out a body of plain, honest, sturdy and unselfish clergy, thoroughly devoted to one another, and peculiarly adapted for religious work in the West, where work counts and place is indifferent. This may explain the mystery of the spirit of old St. Thomas', which lost much of its vigor and bloom in the transplantation. It was the spirit of a Flaget and a David, transmitted down through a line of worthy successors, comprising such men as Abell, Aud, Coomes, Hutchins, Chambige, Durbin, Elliott, and many other pioneer priests, as well as those who did the work of the transition period, and whom God has called to their eternal reward. The generality of these, notwithstanding their rural training, passed muster in the best society, and some of them even did honor to the purple.

Of the living I shall not speak further than to say, that to them, the passing of old St. Thomas' is like the loss of an old friend. Its material body has disappeared, but its spirit is not dead. That still animates the survivors among its children, and makes them a body of priests as unselfish, as apostolic, and as united as any that ever honored an *alma mater*. The material St. Thomas' is dead, but the spiritual St. Thomas' will live as long as there shall be a single one of the old students remaining to relate the history of old times.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Going to St. Thomas'.—First Impressions.—The South.—The Seminary.—Father Chambige.—The Prefect.—The Students.—The Professors.—Some Human Traits.—Death and Grave of Father Chambige.—The Debating Society.—Recreations.—Food.—Spiritualities.—Pranks.—Excursions.—The Servants.—The Sisters.—St. Thomas' not Preternatural.

My own entrance into the Seminary was simple enough. I should have entered with the class in September, 1867, but at that time I was upon my back with an attack of typhoid fever. When sufficiently recovered to undertake the journey from Denver to St. Thomas' I set out, armed with a letter from the Very Rev. J. P. Machebeuf to Father Chambige, his old friend and fellow-countryman from the same neighborhood in France.

My reasons for going to St. Thomas' were, that there was no seminary near my home, and a journey of a few miles more or less made but little difference. St. Thomas' was a preparatory seminary, and the general expense was within my means. Then, my pastor was a personal friend of Father Chambige, and was pleased that I should begin my studies under him. Advertising, also, sometimes helps. I got my first knowledge and desire of St. Thomas' from the Prospectus published in the Catholic Directory.

Traveling was not as cheap and comfortable, nor as rapid, in those days as it is at present. The first stage of my journey was to Kansas City, and the fare was \$75. One half of the distance was by coach through a country infested by hostile Indians. There were but three passengers in the coach, but we were well

armed and determined to make a good running fight if attacked. Luckily, we were not molested, else, very likely, I would not now be telling this little story. At Hays City, Kansas, we reached the western end of the Union Pacific railroad then in course of construction. It was in mid-December, but the days were like Indian summer, and typical of western weather for that season. The greatest inconvenience we had suffered was fatigue, and we welcomed the sight of a train waiting upon the track. The train was a mixed affair of freight and gravel cars, with an accommodation passenger coach attached, that would not be tolerated today on any train as a "Jim Crow" car, yet the thought of the ride in that car with its bare boards for seats, upon one of which I lay down to sleep after fifty-eight hours of constant travel in the coach, comes back to me now with a remembrance of a feeling of rest and satisfaction that no vestibuled Pullman sleeping car has ever brought to me. Twenty hours more brought me to Kansas City. Now, the entire journey is made in seventeen hours, for seventeen dollars,—just one dollar an hour, which was about the price of my traveling in 1867.

From Kansas City the trip was without incident. It was night when I arrived at Bardstown, and I went to a hotel called the Murphy House, where I was served with my first dish of Southern hominy.

The next morning I hired a conveyance and was driven out to St. Thomas' through a cold, winter rain. The country was strange to me, and a strange feeling came over me. It was a feeling of passiveness that fitted me to meet any scene or event without astonishment, and to wait in conscious and careless ignorance

for the next. I had known the South only from reading Uncle Tom's Cabin and the papers during the late war, and it would not have surprised me to have met old Uncle Tom himself, or a troop of butternut Ku-Kluxes. In fact, I rather expected something of the sort, but felt no painful disappointment when nothing of the kind happened.

In my state of mind, the first view of the Seminary was not liable to impress me over-much, but I saw in it a welcome shelter from the cold and rain. A student, who happened to be on the outside, politely conducted me to the door of Father Chambige's room, and, in answer to my knock, a voice told me to enter. I did so, and, standing at a desk with a pen in his hand, I first saw Father Chambige.

Something more than twenty years later I was present when one of the old students of that day was consecrated a bishop. He was not noted for his beauty, in fact, the consecrating prelate, in a speech that was a virtual introduction of the new bishop to his clergy, thought it proper to warn them against any hastily formed judgment, assuring them that, "In this case, first impressions are the worst!"

That was exactly my case with Father Chambige. He was slightly above medium height, straight and well-proportioned. He had snow-white hair standing well out from his head, piercing eyes, fair complexion and features bordering on the stern. His mouth was apparently devoid of teeth, with a single exception, and his dress was a cassock that had seen its best days long before. Thus I remember Father Chambige, but then, he was my pastor's friend and must be good. And he was good, and his goodness grew upon me



and won my warmest respect, but never dissipated a certain degree of reverential and salutary fear.

The following day was the regular weekly holiday, and Father Chambige suggested that I rest, and meet the students in the day's recreation before beginning my studies. He took me to the prefect's room and left me with the prefect who was off duty for that month.

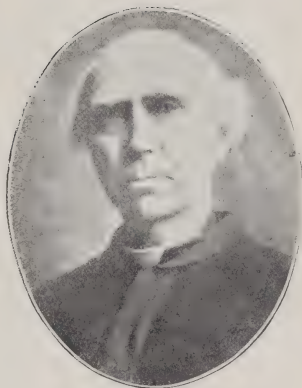
This particular prefect was a tall, lank Kentuckian, with high cheek bones that would have done honor to a descendant of Pocahontas. I must have been a nuisance to him that day in his attempts to prepare his lessons, but he never held it against me. If he lost that day he made up for it many times afterwards, for he became a zealous and successful pastor and apostolic missionary.

My fellow-students, not knowing of my recent illness, attributed my pale color and delicate appearance to constitutional weakness, and predicted, as I learned afterward, that I would not long stand the diet and regime of St. Thomas'. But I had led the life of a farmer's boy for seventeen years, and in addition, had spent two years on the frontiers of civilization where there is a rough edge even upon the smooth things of life. When I went to St. Thomas', I went there to stay. Any alternative was not in the plan, nor was it necessary, for, although there were many things at St. Thomas' that one would wish to see improved upon, there were many things that might have been worse. I had been in worse places before, and many times since have I been in situations, compared to which St. Thomas' would appear in a very favorable light. The regime there left no weak spots in my

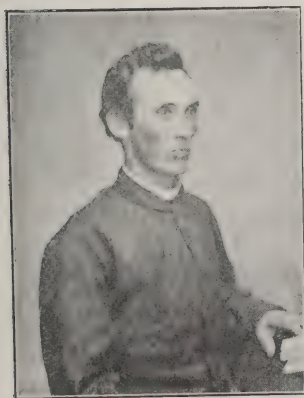




REV. J. J. ABELL.



REV. D. O'SULLIVAN.



REV. E. DRURY.



REV. W. P. HOGARTY.



physical make-up. The principal attacks of sickness that I have had since then were seasickness and small-pox, and surely, I contracted no predisposition towards them at old St. Thomas'.

The students were uniformly kind and obliging, with no superior or patronizing airs, no repelling ways or holding aloof manners, but a natural and easy familiarity that set one at ease and gave a home feeling to the new-comer. I have no recollection of any quarrel or serious dispute between any of them during the years of my stay there. There was no uniform prescribed, so every one wore such clothing as he might bring from home. All were comfortably dressed, but without extravagance, and I noticed that the Kentuckians in their general choice of material favored the "jeans."

The professors were gentlemen always. They mingled freely with the students, particularly in their games, and were ready at all times to help them in their difficulties. To me, Father Russell was especially kind, and helped me to regain the ground I had lost through my lateness in arriving, so that at the end of the year my standing in my classes was not below the average.

Father Crane was the teacher of our classical studies, and of our English composition. He never had very much to say in class, but he had a way of drawing out his pupil, and making him use his own resources until the lesson almost stood out clear before him. He made us think and reason out things, and thus, each one of his lessons was an exercise that helped for the preparation of the next. Socially, he was equal to the best of the boys, and every game and social gathering

was more complete if Father Crane was in it. The old saying, that red-haired people are quick-tempered, did not seem to be borne out in his case. Many times I saw him laugh, smile, and even look serious, but I never saw him display the least anger. His hair was white when I last saw him.

He could appreciate a joke, or see a ludicrous point as quickly as anyone. I shall never forget his burst of laughter one day in the composition class. The subject that had been given for our not very facile pens was, "On a Pin." The most of us had been racking our few brains for a week at odd times, trying to put together some sort of a lengthy dissertation, and it was no easy task with so small a subject. In class we read our labored productions, and Father Eugene made his criticisms and commendations upon them as he thought they merited. In the course of the class he called upon one of the students who was familiarly called "Pud." He is a worthy priest now, and has charge of a flourishing parish in one of our large cities. "Pud" was somewhat of a poet, but he suffered almost continually from headache. Only at the last moment had "Pud" been able to pull himself together and begin to write, so that, as class was called, he had only a few lines on a sheet of paper. He was the oldest and most serious member of the class, and when called he began solemnly :

"When the stitches in your breeches  
Do begin to rip,  
Just take a pin, and stick it in,—  
'Twill hold it with a grip."

There was just one more verse in the same style, but I have forgotten part of it, and hence omit the

whole. The face of Father Crane was a study for a moment, and then—well, we had no more class that hour.

As a prefect of discipline, he kept order without losing the good will of the students, and at no time, during my seminary course or since, did I ever hear anyone utter an unfriendly word against Father Eugene Crane.

Father Creary came to us but a short time before the removal to Bardstown, and we never drew up so close to him as to the other professors. He was pastor of the congregation and his duties kept him more away from us. He was a great snuff-taker, but he was careful to keep his clothing always immaculate. He was a good teacher and treated his class nicely, but I think he preferred parish work.

Father Chambige loved his students, and he had the habit, which seemed almost wilful, of giving one of his peculiar coughs which was half a grunt, before appearing in sight of them, as if to warn them of his coming, and thus give them a chance to put on their good behavior. He showed great solicitude for their health, and the thought of his dose of pills kept many a student from complaining too loudly. He was strict, but not severe, although it was said that he kept a cat-o'-nine-tails in his room. I cannot vouch for the truth of this, but if he did, it was simply for the moral effect upon the younger students; he was never known to use it. No doubt he had provocation to justify its use, but his kindness of heart was such that I do not think he would intentionally give pain to any creature. The harshest word I ever heard him speak was, "My goodness alive!"

He cared little for appearances and less for fashion, and when, upon the occasions of his going to Nazareth for his official duties he put on his old-fashioned high hat and his long linen duster, and had the old white horses hitched to the old carriage, and when, as sometimes happened, good old Sister Clementia went along to visit her Sisters in religion at the Motherhouse, it was a slightly remarkable spectacle, to say the least. Even upon these occasions, there was not one whit less of dignity about Father Chambige. It was not he that appeared ludicrous, but the accessories, and they were not half as remarkable as they would have been with any other than Father Chambige.

Like every one else, Father Chambige had his foibles, and one of them was an excessive dread of the somewhat ostentatious, but equally harmless, display of Irish patriotism by the students on St. Patrick's Day. He was almost beside himself on one of these occasions when, upon returning from Nazareth, he found the green flag floating over the Seminary. Once, when his sacristan, either designedly or as a matter of course, laid out green vestments for the mass of the feast, he went on with the mass entirely unconscious of the fact. His opposition, however, was not without a show of reason, for those were the times when the doctrine of physical force was more talked of in Irish politics than now.

The affections of Father Chambige were very closely bound up with St. Thomas' and the students, and it cost him a severe pang to separate from them finally. This separation may have had some influence on his future actions, but, surely, no act or advice of his was ever dictated by any but motives of love of justice, and what he conceived to be the best interests of religion.



His home thereafter was at Nazareth, and there he died, Dec. 30, 1877, and his remains were buried in the convent cemetery. There he lies near Bishop David who gave to St. Thomas' its first great success, who taught him and guided his first attempts at teaching, and whose life he seemed to pattern after, either naturally or by studied imitation; near Fathers Russell, and Elder, and Disney, whose lives he had directed in their youthful days, and formed for the usefulness of their after years; near his college friend, Father Hazeltine, who preceded him in the directorship of the consecrated children of Nazareth, and in the midst of these same children whose sanctification had been his special care for seventeen years. In the midst of all these he lies at rest after a life of labor, sacrifice, and singleness of purpose that all committed to his care might be formed and live after God's idea. Over that grave and around it, breathes the living, grateful and reverential love of many who remember him but to bless him. Eternal rest be yours, good, dear old Father Chambige, you well deserved the name of *Father*.

A strong lever in our educational machinery was the Debating Society. It discussed a wide range of topics, and was an incentive to deeper research into matters of history and other lore, as well as being a good practical school in argument and speaking. It was there that nearly every student appeared before "the public," and broke down in his maiden speech. Few ever soared into the toplofty, or "tore passion to tatters," but many a good argument was well expressed at its sessions, and the summing-up by its president was always full of interest and instruction.

For pastimes, we had hand-ball, and base-ball, and foot-ball in season, and we did not disdain marbles and mumble-the-peg. The old swimming hole was universally popular in summer time. It was our only bathtub, but we thought more of it as a place of amusement than as a source of health. Occasionally, some one unable to swim would get beyond his depth, but nothing more serious ever came from that than a good fright, and a lesson that for safety

“ Little boats keep near the shore ;  
Larger craft may venture more.”

Students from the North took advantage of the cold weather for skating, and there were some experts at the sport. The Southern boys generally fought shy of any fancy work on the ice.

The walk on recreation days was an established institution, and was varied in season by making it an excursion in the woods for nuts, pawpaws, persimmons and wild fruits. Sometimes it was made the occasion of a search for sassafras root, which still had a prominent place in St. Thomas' pharmacopœia.

The food did not differ much from that supplied in earlier times, but we always had plenty of it. Dodger, darbies, and rye coffee with long sweetening, were terms of special import to the students of St. Thomas', but they are now relegated to “the dim vista of the past,” and,—*requiescant!* Besides our regular meals, we had an informal bite of something, generally dry bread, at four o'clock in the afternoon. This snack was called, “soup,” but for what reason, I never learned. Our food was probably the ordinary food of Kentucky farmers,—good for the farmers, but not so good for students in a seminary. Even as it

was, the most of us relished it, and it was only in later years that we seemed to wake up to the fact that we had been practicing special mortification.

Our spiritual interests were carefully watched over. Instruction in Christian Doctrine was a part of the curriculum, and meditation and spiritual reading were daily exercises. Regular Confession and Communion were the rule, and every student aspired to become a member of the Sodality. The solemn ceremonies of the Church were observed on the great festivals, and during Holy Week the study-hall and class-rooms resounded with the voices of the students preparing their parts in the *Tenebræ*. The musical portion of this seems simple enough to us now, but in those days of stage fright it was a sore trial upon our nerves, and it was a grim consolation to the more timid when one of the older students and best Latin scholars began his lesson :—" *Ex Tractatu Sti. Augustini super Plasmos.*"

But we were not all saints in those days. Many were the tricks played and the pranks perpetrated. Pillow fights were sometimes indulged in when the prefect was not in the dormitory, and the trapping of a bed, so as to let the occupant sink to the floor, was not unknown. A quiet raid on the orchard, or the bake-house, or the milk-house, was also sometimes in order, and a sly smoke was a luxury at times enjoyed. These were about the average of our greater offenses against law and order, and they were not too frequent, nor by any means general. On the whole, the students were well-behaved, and did nothing that would disgrace them as inmates of a religious institution.

At Christmas and Easter, greater excursions were the order of the day, and a trip to Nazareth, or to the Monks at Gethsemane was the consummation of a plan long thought over. There was a more extended trip that included Loretto, St. Mary's College, Lebanon and St. Rose's Dominican Convent. For this we used to secure horses or mules from the neighboring farmers, but as several days were necessary for this swing around the circle, it was more the privilege of students from far away, who remained at the Seminary during the summer vacation.

The negro servants about the place were the genuine Southern darkies with all their simplicity, good humor and cuteness. It is told of old fat Charity, that one day she was wobbling past the study-hall with a ducklike motion during the hour of spiritual reading, just when the reader came to the quotation from St. Paul,—“Charity is patient, is kind, charity envieth not, etc.,” and sticking her head in at the door, she said: “What’s dat you’s a-sayin ’bout me?” Another, was old Friday. He could play the fiddle pretty well, but could scarcely spell out his own name. Some of the students persuaded him that, as he had been so long at the Seminary, all that he needed was a little Latin to become a priest. So he procured an old rag of a Latin grammar and used to spend hours poring over it. One day in his absence his cabin took fire and was burned to the ground. When Friday came home and saw the ruin he was inconsolable. Father Russell thought to cheer him up by telling him that the loss was not very great, for his fiddle had been saved, and a new cabin was easily built. Poor old Friday shook his head and said mournfully: “I doan ky-ar nuffin ’bout dat

ol' fiddle, but I's so sorry dat I los' my Latin grammar." When the Rev. Dr. Martin came from Rome to St. Thomas', it was old Friday who said: "I reck'n we won't haf to have Dr. Mattin'ly come out f'm Ba'dstown no moah, cause we done got a doctah of our own."

The Sisters in charge of the domestic arrangements, which meant the cooking, washing, mending, and the care of the sick, were Sisters Clementia, Modesta, Olivia and Eusebia. Sister Irene at Nazareth was a special favorite with us, for she had charge of the Priest's House where we always found a feast prepared when we visited Nazareth, and Sister Umbelline is remembered as one who filled our pockets when we could eat no more. In this she was assisted by Sisters Mary Louis, Lucilla, Guidonia, Agatha and a few others. Their little acts of kindness have brought them a few prayerful remembrances since then.

Life at St. Thomas' was not unpleasant. It was not a round of penitential exercises with an accompanying fast thrown in. Nor was it an apprenticeship of the Gradgrind school. St. Thomas' was a place where boys lived in the nature of boys, growing naturally into men and men's ways as boys grow under proper influence; where boys and young men, just such as the world is filled with, went from homes that resembled the homes of to-day, and suffered no violent wrenching of their nature in order to adapt themselves to this mode of life. A course of training at St. Thomas' required no superhuman courage in its inception nor in its continuance, and it could interweave itself so closely with life, that years of severance, instead of bringing the desire of forgetfulness, "made the heart grow fonder" of those halcyon days of youth.



## CHAPTER XIX.

A Retrospect.—Changes.—Their Causes.—Pioneer Priests and Pioneer People.—Heroic Times and Heroes.—Learning Among the Clergy.—St. Thomas' to the Front.—Growth of the Church —Giants and Their Successors.—Roll of Honor.—Special Claim for Remembrance.—Dignity of the King.—Judge Not.

The traveler on business takes the shortest road to his destination, and hastens on unmindful of the country through which he passes. The traveler for pleasure and knowledge chooses the more picturesque routes, and halts here and there to view the choice bits of scenery on his way. These scenes come to him successively, and each is a complete picture in itself, yet each is but a part of a larger picture and fits into the mosaic of a grander view. To get an adequate idea of the beauty of the whole, he must ascend some eminence where the country will appear spread out before him as a panorama.

We have now gone through the history of old St. Thomas' Seminary, from scene to scene, but our ideas will not be complete and connected unless we ascend the hill and look upon the things that the lengthening years have spread out from the present, to the limit of vision in the dim and rapidly disappearing past.

“This is the place. Stand still, my steed,  
Let me review the scene,  
And summon from the shadowy past  
The forms that once have been.”

The fifty-eight years that passed between the day of the opening of St. Thomas' Seminary in November, 1811, and the day of its closing in October, 1869,



were years most fruitful of change and event, and of powerful instruments of both. In 1811, Kentucky was a child in swaddling clothes ;— in 1869, it was a giant among men, and it had a vigorous youth and a strongly developed manhood. The civilization of Daniel Boone had grown into that of Henry Clay, and the successor of the little log chapel on the Beech Fork was the stately Cathedral of Louisville. At St. Thomas' the first little flame of learning was kindled, and Christian schools and colleges dotted the land. The Kentucky of 1869 was less the Kentucky of 1811, than is the Europe of to-day the Europe of five hundred years ago.

The causes for this were many, but all working together brought about the wonderful change, and not the least of these causes was old St. Thomas' Seminary. Though dealing with matters strictly clerical, its influence went with its priests into every walk of life. Every family where the priest could enter felt its influence, and that family in turn bore to the family where he could not enter, the indirect influence of the same priest, and of the power behind him—St. Thomas' Seminary. What inestimable, and superabundant blessings of religion and education would have been wanting in Kentucky if St. Thomas' Seminary had never been established ! We may allow for all the probabilities of other institutions coming to the rescue, but we must acknowledge that the work of Kentucky's Seminary was far and away in advance of anything that other institutions could have supplied. This is especially true of Kentucky, where the children of St. Thomas' worked in a body, and it is proportionately true of other localities where

they worked in smaller groups or single-handed. If St. Thomas' did nothing more than to develop the religious spirit, that was so rich in vocations for work which none could do better than those to the manner born, that alone would have been sufficient to keep its memory in benediction for ages that only the future can determine.

A century ago there was no organized Church in Kentucky. Fathers Badin and Nerinckx had a few scattered groups of the faithful, with no pastors, no schools or any regular means of instruction. The firm faith of the early settlers from Maryland and Virginia was the safety of the young, and the patriarchal authority of the father was the safeguard of the faith of the children. Upon this the early missionaries builded, and there arose a generation strong in faith, docile to authority, and reverent of holy things. From these came forth that rugged race of pioneer priests, who took up, spread and perpetuated the work of their predecessors. They even did more than this, for their predecessors did but explore and mark the paths, and it was theirs to prepare the rough soil, to plant, to water and reap, and half a century of this kind of work was necessary before every valley could be filled, and every mountain and hill be brought low, and the crooked be made straight and the rough ways plain.

The work of the first missionaries in Kentucky was peculiar, and it differed widely from the work of the priest there to-day. They visited the settlements and said mass and administered the Sacraments; they catechised the young, not only at the stations, but they went to their homes and instructed them; they

inculcated family devotions in common for all, and, in a way, preached to every family individually. In addition to being the pastors of their congregations, they were in the closer relation of pastor of each family, and the family included the very slaves of the household and plantation, some of whom were at times called upon to lead in family prayers. They had little call for the exercise of oratory, but there was a continual necessity for the teaching word, and I imagine that they were just such men as would delight the heart of our present Pontiff, Pius X, who insists so strongly upon catechetical instruction. With vice they had no patience, and dreaded its very shadow, hence they discountenanced many of those things that to-day are called innocent amusements. Merely social visits were not frequent; their calls meant an encouragement to piety, and the people looked for their coming and received them as ministers of God.

This condition lasted long after the early missionaries had passed away, and every missionary priest coming after them must follow in their footsteps and organize and direct his little congregation along the same lines. It cannot be doubted that it was a good system, for it made religion more of an every-day matter, and the priest more nearly held the place of the "Soggarth Aroon" of Ireland. The memory of those early priests is still held in reverence. Their peculiarities may be smiled at, but their piety and zeal are never doubted, and the good effected by them is acknowledged by all. Those of them, whose lives reached into the memory of the present generation, are generally referred to as "Good old Father So and So." There is a whole history in that expression.

Old St. Thomas' had to prepare these priests, and to prepare them for these conditions. Those times might be called, the heroic times. Bishop Flaget was a heroic Bishop, and he fully understood how to form a heroic priesthood for a heroic people, and when we go over the list of the priests who lived and labored with him, we must say that he succeeded admirably in that portion of the duties of his office. He did not have the time to make scholars of them all, and but few of them had time amidst their mission duties for any extensive studies after their ordination, so they went through life in their unassuming way, doing the work that could be done only by brave and devoted priests. They had plenty of knowledge for their work, and could confound an antagonist as effectually as the most learned Doctor, although in a different way. Their opponents were generally men of little learning in religious matters, and always of intense prejudice, and the style of the missionaries never failed to rout them "horse, foot and dragoons." Their style of argument was accusation and vituperation, and their disposition is best exemplified by the closing remark of one of them in a discussion with Dr. Kenrick in 1827: "If an angel, descended from heaven, preached a doctrine similar to that of the Irish priest, I would reject him!" Bishop Flaget reported to Rome that, among his priests, there were several very good controversialists, but, in the sense that a good controversialist is one who upholds the truth and confounds its enemies, every one of them was a good controversialist.

Some of the earlier students of St. Thomas', notwithstanding their short hours of study and long

hours of labor, became learned enough to be very successful educators, and to make St. Joseph's College, and St. Mary's College and Mount Merino centers of literary activity and sources of enlightenment over Kentucky and the entire South. The first root of the Transylvania University—the Bacon College at Georgetown, Ky.,—was planted only in 1836, and until that time, the old students of St. Thomas' were the masters of all higher education in Kentucky.

A professedly literary education was not generally given to the earlier priests, and it may be true that few of them had the ability to contribute anything to literature. It is equally true that few of them had the time or the occasion for attempting anything of this kind, but most of them wrote well, and their letters are models of epistolary writing. I have several such letters before me now—some of them dating as far back as 1823,—and I would be glad to insert them here, if I could find the least excuse in their subject matter for connecting them with this history. Some wrote interestingly for the early Catholic papers, and there were those who wrote even very good verse. Then there were men among them, who, by their pen and their tongue, “gained glory in their generation, and were praised in their days.” These were men who had the accidents of a superior training, but at the bottom, they were of the same material and cast in the same mold as their less favored brothers. Old St. Thomas' Seminary always furnished the men that were needed. When the Church called for missionaries of a heroic character, St. Thomas' furnished them; when she needed educators, St. Thomas' furnished them; when she needed



preachers, St. Thomas' furnished them; when she needed Bishops, St. Thomas' furnished its quota of them, and when she needed good, hard-working, zealous and self-sacrificing priests, St. Thomas' furnished them, and furnished them until the end.

Men are to be judged in the times in which they live. If they keep up with ordinary times, they are ordinary men; if, in extraordinary times, they are in the front ranks, there must be something extraordinary about them. When, in remarkable times, there are found men who are pushing their work in advance of all other things, there must be something remarkable about them. At the close of the first half of the last century, civilization had grown and spread in Kentucky to a marvelous degree; material progress had waxed rapid, but far in advance of all this was the growth of the Church. From a mere nothing the Church grew until its idea seemed to overshadow all things else, and "the Gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things. The kings of the earth stood up and the princes met together against the Lord and against his Christ," and the result was a "Bloody Monday." To give the Church this prominence was not the work of ordinary men. A gigantic work had been accomplished, and for its accomplishment, we are necessarily forced to the conclusion that "there were giants in those days." The clergy of Kentucky were so remarkable, and did such noble work from the beginning, and so worthily upheld the dignity of the priesthood, that Kentucky mothers, like Irish mothers, coveted no greater honor than to have a priest among their sons.







RT. REV. HENRY J. RICHTER.



RT. REV. MICHAEL TIERNEY.



RT. REV. D. O'DONAGHUE.



RT. REV. JAMES RYAN.

Changed conditions required different methods in the second half of the century, but not less heroic men, and the sustained growth of the Church shows that they were there, following the lead of those who had gone before, and doing the work ably and well. Zeal, self-sacrifice and holiness were always necessary, and are necessary yet; they were found at all times among the clergy of Kentucky, and the blood of the sturdy, fearless and practical Catholic pioneer, that produced the men who laid in such strength the foundations of the Church of Kentucky, and built it up in such magnificent proportions, can yet furnish a class of priests who will ever do honor to their race, and continue the history of their church in keeping with its glorious past, in which old St. Thomas' was so potent a factor.

In scanning the lists of priests who made their studies, in whole or in part at St. Thomas', we find that certain names stand out more prominently than others, by reason of some specialty in the subsequent career of the individuals. There are those to whom the episcopal dignity came, and their number is not small. It includes Chabrat, Reynolds, De Neckere, Lavialle, Lenihan, Richter, Byrne, Ryan, Tierney, Alerding and O'Donaghue. A special connection makes Flaget, David, Rosati, Kenrick and Perch  honorary members of the list, and the two Spaldings and McGill were, at least, grandchildren of St. Thomas', while Murray, Mackey, and Pilcher, as Domestic Prelates, round out a long and wide history of honor for the old alma mater. Some stand high as educators, and in this category we note the founders and teachers in the diocesan institutions and other seminaries. It shows such names as

Byrne, Hutchins, Powell, Harnist, Crane, Ryan, the teachers at St. Thomas', at St. Mary's in Cincinnati, and the Very Rev. Dean Grannan, of the Catholic University at Washington. Vicars-General, Deans and diocesan officials are plentifully scattered through the list, and to many names are appended the letters that mark the owners as Jesuits, Franciscans, Redemptorists or members of some other religious order. By far the longest list is of pastors, preachers and workers in the lower order of the clergy, who have supported their leaders in the work of God, from lake to gulf and from coast to summit over the entire country, everywhere doing their part in pushing the Church to the front, as they, almost alone, pushed it to the far front in Kentucky during the life of the Seminary. They were more widely scattered than the students from any other similar institution in the land, but, as widely as they were scattered, they never forgot the lessons of charity and unity that welded them together into a band of brothers at St. Thomas'.

The secret force that gave them this distinguishing mark of the disciples of Christ, was the spirit that was planted by Bishop Flaget and Father David ; that was nourished by their successors, and which dear old Father Chambige did not fail to impress upon every one of the hundreds of students who lived under his care. "In the multitude of the people is the dignity of the king," and in the fidelity, devotion, apostolic zeal, and this spirit of unity, persevering in the great body of his students, is found the most perfect eulogy that can be pronounced in memory of the last Superior of Old St. Thomas' Seminary.

In the general view is there nothing to give pain, nothing to bring a discord into the harmony of a drama of a century? Has every actor known his lines, and performed his part well? Such a miracle was never yet known, and we should not look for it here. The work has been done, the great actors stand out prominently, the lesser ones have had their lesser parts, and if one has seemed to fail in some things,

“Not ours to gauge the more or less,  
The will's defect, the blood's excess,  
The earthly humors that oppress  
The radiant mind.  
His greatness, not his littleness,  
Concerns mankind.”

## CHAPTER XX.

Provincial Seminaries and Diocesan Seminaries.—Revival of St. Thomas'.—Fatal Deficiencies.—Some Good Points.—A Modern St. Thomas'.—A Religious Advertisement.—Sacred Ground.—A Vocation.—A Long Road.—Successfully Traveled.—Humble Beginnings.—Signs of a Vocation.—The Poor Boy.—Prayers for the Priesthood.—The Court of the Temple.—A Word of Thanks.—Finis.

Old St. Thomas' was the first Provincial Preparatory Seminary in the country. The action of the Council that made it so, was not taken as an experiment, and other Provinces soon followed the lead of Cincinnati. The idea was to gather the greater number of students together and provide stronger teaching faculties. This arrangement had also the advantages of widening associations in times when people traveled less than now, and of interchanging thoughts and experiences, with the effect of preventing narrow action and local fossilization.

The settling of the country brought in the railroads with increased general travel, and the press so spread the knowledge of all happenings, that localities disappeared in the former sense of the word with their hampering limitations. Thus the necessities for general seminaries grew less, and as the dioceses became more populous and prosperous they began to establish diocesan seminaries, until now few of the greater dioceses send their students to outside seminaries for their education. The exception to the rule is found in the laudable custom of sending a few of the more promising students to Rome, Louvain or to some of the greater universities for special studies, or a wider training in matters of practical utility at home.



By this plan, as carried on in our days, little or nothing is lost of the former advantages, while there is a decided gain in other things. It increased the number of students, by giving a home interest to the seminaries and making them more easily accessible. It also fostered a spirit of unity among the students themselves, and between the new priests going out and those already working in the diocese. In this way it made them a more homogeneous body than they would have been if, living as strangers until after their ordination, they then were associated together with only the bond of a common ordination and a similarity of work. This closer union was never more clearly manifested than among the diocesan students at St. Thomas' in its early days. It is distinctly visible yet among the survivors of the later-day students.

Cincinnati was the first diocese to return to the diocesan system, and its students were withdrawn from St. Thomas' Seminary. The war forced this action a little prematurely, but Cincinnati had the support of other dioceses similarly situated, and the success of its venture was not uncertain. Students from other parts still came to St. Thomas', and these, with the home students, continued the old Seminary in a condition of reasonable prosperity.

With this outside patronage, and in time without it, if necessary, St. Thomas' could have stood and continued the work of its earlier days when it made Kentucky lead all the other Western States in religious development. Its closing, I believe, was a loss, not only to Kentucky, but beyond it where that old institution, like no other, was wont to "stretch forth its branches unto the sea and its boughs unto the river."

The question may suggest itself here: Would I wish the revival of old St. Thomas'?

This is not written as a plea for the resuscitation of the old Seminary, as dear as it may have been, but as a tribute to the good that was in it, and to those who exemplified in their lives the apostolic lessons learned within its walls. However, as the question is a natural one, an answer is here appropriate.

The revival of old St. Thomas' is not possible, nor is it advisable. Old St. Thomas' had many deficiencies, and they would have been fatal to its prolonged existence in the same circumstances. No one can doubt that St. Thomas' did splendid work in its rough way, and took hold of young men by the right handle. A strong proof of this is found in the fact that there is no record of any one, priest or layman, who had been a student at St. Thomas' for any length of time, who did not have a pleasant recollection of it and a kind word for it. But its material methods are long out of date. It was a pioneer seminary, and a seminary for pioneers. When the pioneer stage had passed, it was time for old St. Thomas' to cease to exist, or take on a new youth. Changes and improvements had been introduced into St. Thomas', from time to time since its establishment, and they came none too fast. Others were imperative in the rush of progress after the war, if St. Thomas' was to keep up its prestige and compete with other institutions, and there was scant hope of their early coming.

There were, nevertheless, a few things about old St. Thomas' that were worthy of perpetuation. It was essentially a *preparatory* seminary, and was equipped to receive boys and young men when the

signs of a vocation appeared, whether they were ready for the higher studies or only the Latin grammar. Its training was with the idea of the priesthood paramount. It encouraged no other aspirations and opened no other prospect. It was pleased that the majority of its students had never been through any secular college, where secular ideas fill the air, and where secular aims prevail. St. Thomas' got them at the time when their characters were in the course of formation, and could use its mold on fresh material. It was not obliged to put its training over an underlying stratum of worldly thoughts and ambitions, which might come to the surface in eruption at an evil moment. In this way it saved many vocations, and made all more free from temporal considerations.

This constant forward movement of the boy through his youth and early manhood, with the priesthood as his aim, was a good feature of St. Thomas', and so, also, was its adaptation to the means of those in poorer circumstances. Its moderate charges admitted of very few luxuries, and if any of the students had any money for extravagance, the spirit of the place was against such expenditure, so that, in matters of wealth, there was no humiliating distinction between the poorest student and the one who might have unlimited means behind him.

Its lack of luxuries was right in principle, although the times may have forced this principle to an extreme during the war, and its application was always rather rigorous, but it was not more strictly applied at St. Thomas' than we found it enforced in our new Seminary at Bardstown. The natural and growing tendency is to avoid privation, yet a little

practical education during seminary life in the conditions that are to be ours in after life, cannot fail to do us good, while the constant use in college of comforts not usually found in parish and mission, may create a desire for easy places, and discouragement in difficult ones. Those used to palaces are not easily satisfied in ordinary homes, but those used to ordinary homes can accommodate themselves to palaces—if they must!—with less difficulty. My thirty years of mission life have shown me too many, even young priests, whose first inquiry about a mission or a parish, was concerning the comforts, the salary, and the perquisites. These notions were never gotten at old St. Thomas', so I say, there were a few ideas at St. Thomas' that might with profit be perpetuated.

A modern St. Thomas' would, in many respects, differ from the old, for it would have the modern necessary conveniences, and dispense more of the necessary comforts, such as are ordinarily found in modern homes. With these it would have, like old St. Thomas', the simplicity of a religious house, where the atmosphere would be filled with the priestly idea, and the idea of self-sacrifice. It would be accessible to the poor young man if he had evidences of a real vocation, and to the rich young man only on the same conditions. In this sense, would I wish to see St. Thomas' revived? To this I answer most emphatically : *Yes!*

The houses of the Religious Orders are on this plan, and no one can deny that they make a great drain upon a most admirable class of young men who would make excellent members of the diocesan clergy, and whom the dioceses can ill afford to lose. Bishops

are sometimes known to show a greater regard for the regular clergy, who are but temporarily located in their dioceses, than for their own clergy who are always with them. If there is any reasonable cause for this reversed condition of the logical order of things, it would disappear, were the Bishops to give the same care to the education of their own students as the Religious Orders give to the training of their subjects.

Here is an advertisement that is now going the rounds of the Catholic press :

#### AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG MEN.

The attention of young men, desiring to study for holy priesthood, is called to the offer, made by the Fathers of the.....Order.

Twenty-five free scholarships, with living, are open to as many worthy young men, who have fair talent and good health, and who believe that they have a vocation for the priesthood as members of the Order of St.....

On the matchless college grounds at....., stands St.....'s Hall, a school established for the training and education of young men for our Order. While here they will enjoy all the educational privileges of..... College, but at the same time they will have complete separation from the secular students.

Each one will have the exclusive use of his own room in the Hall, which is fitted up with all modern conveniences.

It is required that those who apply for this privilege will already have received a grammar school education, and will be between the age of 14 and 20 years. They will also be required to furnish testimonials from competent authority, of previous good morality.

All inquiries and communications relative to this matter must be addressed to the Very Rev....., Provincial.

The Very Rev. Provincial will have his scholarships filled, and the secular priests will help him to



fill them, for they will find worthy young men with vocations, for whom no provision can be made at home, and they will aid them to profit by this opportunity. May Heaven bless the Order that makes the offer, and may the example be contagious outside of the Orders.

If the average active life of the priest be twenty-five years, then a diocese must renew its clergy every twenty-five years. It requires ten years of preparation for the priesthood. This would suppose forty students, were all to persevere and none die, in a diocese of one hundred priests, if that diocese is to be self-supporting. Two-thirds of these would be in the preparatory seminary from the select young men of the diocese, and the less select might try their prospects elsewhere. How many of our dioceses are self-supporting?

Not only would I like to see one St. Thomas', but a St. Thomas' in every State of the Union. I would especially like to see a modern St. Thomas' rise upon the old spot that is hallowed by so many memories.

It is said that something attaches to the soil of Ireland, sanctified as it is by her great apostle and his martyred children, that makes her people rich in faith and virtue. Old St. Thomas' had the blessing of Bishop Flaget and Father David. Its soil literally absorbed the sweat of their faces as they toiled to clear it, and plant it and cultivate it for the support of Kentucky's apostles. The touch of the saints is sanctifying, and St. Thomas' never lost the thought of its intimate association with the lives of labor, privation and prayer of those men whom Kentucky holds as its holiest and best. That it was their home, built



up by them, loved by them, and made fruitful by them, was a strong element in its later effectiveness. Why should it not be so again?

In all this I speak only as one who loved old St. Thomas' Seminary, and not in the spirit of criticism. The experience of others is easily greater than mine, and theirs is the action and the responsibility. Their ideas can take form and life; mine are but the expressions of an individual on paper.

A very worthy priest of my acquaintance once told me that, at the age of ten or eleven, he read the lives of the Saints of Egypt. He thought them rather peculiar saints, but the reading made it the dream of his life to become a priest. When such an opportunity unexpectedly came to him, it found him more than ready to begin the rough apprenticeship that terminated at the goal upon which his desires had settled. The present book may be read by some boy, or young man, of like sensibilities. It is not of the Saints of Egypt, but of men, whose lives ran parallel to those of the Saints of Egypt, and yet did not deviate much from the parallel of our own lives. The self-sacrifice, the prayer, the mortification and labor of the Saints of Egypt were practiced to a great degree by the early Kentucky priests and students, yet they were of our nature, home and kin. In youth, they differed in nothing from us, save that we are richer in means and opportunities. If the contemplation of the far-off Saints of Egypt could fire a youthful heart with the desire of a far-off imitation, the knowledge of these closer uncanonized saints of Kentucky may well give a thought to their closer imitation.

Again, this book may fall into the hands of some youth who would fain turn his steps towards the sanc-

tuary, if that goal did not appear so distant. It is a far cry from the humble fireside to the altar of God, and a long road separates the serving altar boy from the celebrating priest, but surely, not longer now than it was a hundred years ago, when the youth of that day started out over the road that was then as rough and untraveled as his native hills. The distance is not greater in one sense than that which separates the railpile, the tailor shop, the tannery, the canal boat or the cowboy's saddle from the White House and the President's chair, and that distance has been covered from these various starting points.

It was Jeremias, the future prophet, who said : " Ah, ah, ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child." David was the least of the sons of Isai the Bethlehemite, and the last to be presented to Samuel ; Pius X was not of the aristocrats. All men, with a single exception, began life in a cradle, and that exception made a wreck of his own and other lives.

The signs of a vocation are innocence, frankness, intelligence, piety, and a love for the altar and sanctuary. If these germs of a vocation are felt in the soul, the door of some friendly St. Thomas' will open at the knock of an earnest aspirant, and God will do again what He did so many times for those who applied in the past. It is not too much to hope that God will spread even more widely the holy inspiration that He has given to many a good priest, whom He has blessed with a greater abundance of the world's goods in his riper years than he had in his youth, to share his good fortune with one who might become his own worthy successor. Many, in thus





ST. THOMAS' IN 1905.

acting, would only be passing to others a blessing that came to themselves unearned.

I write this word of encouragement for the ordinary boy, and he is of the class that is generally called poor. This is the class, "without father, without mother, without genealogy," that the great body of the clergy will come from, and it is best that they should come free from the embarrassments of pedigree and family, to labor but for one affinity, and that the Church of God.

Such were the men of the past ; such, in general, were the men of St. Thomas', and their spirit lives, and must live always in the Church, for it is the spirit of the Apostles. This spirit conquered the world, and it can hold it in subjection, but the priests must be filled with it, and it alone must inspire their actions.

A few months ago our Holy Father asked the members of the League of the Sacred Heart throughout the world to pray for the priesthood. God knows that we need prayers, and need them at all times, but prayers will not always work miracles and supply the priestly spirit. That must ordinarily be planted in early youth, and watched over that it may grow with the growth of years and knowledge, blossom as the days of ordination come, and the fruit will ripen, if no canker-worm or codling moth find lodgment on the tree. Prayers for such a priesthood are full of hope, and such will be the priesthood if the shoot is grafted young upon the apostolic stem that is rooted in Christ. Where the soil is rich and deep the yield is a moral certainty, but if the soil is poor and shallow all top-dressing is at best only an uncertain dependence. All

honor to old St. Thomas', that, in its day, was like the Court of the Temple, where the priests and the levites prepared to enter the sanctuary. All honor to its spirit, that still lives in every good priest; may there always be many nurseries of the priesthood where it will be found working, and none from which it will be absent. So be it!

And now there remains but a last word to the living of the students of old St. Thomas'. My tribute has grown in length beyond my original intention, but its length is, in part, due to you. The encouragement you gave me, the material assistance you furnished, and the formal help, as necessary as it was freely given, must be my excuse if I am prolix in narrative, or unnecessarily talkative. From a child of the heart one parts reluctantly, and as such I put it before you. Be it well-done or ill-done, not an hour of *irksome* labor has been spent upon it, but every moment has been a moment of actual enjoyment. I trust that it may be the occasion of some pleasure to you, by calling up the memory of the hopeful days and simple scenes of long ago, which never fail to appeal to the students of old St. Thomas' with a peculiar charm. I would fain acknowledge by personal mention the obligations I am under to many of you, but your modesty born of old St. Thomas' bars me, and against your wish I cannot write your names. Many of the facts herein related are clothed in your own language as you gave them to me, all the comments and opinions are my own, and I ask no one to accept them only in so far as they may appeal to his own judgment.



Acknowledging your valuable help that has made the thread of the narrative in this little book continuous, I can for the present but offer thanks, and should the future give occasion for a return of the obligation, I may say, in the words of the Bard of Locksley Hall :

“Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early  
morn :

Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the  
bugle-horn.”









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